

IDAHO EMPLOYMENT

IDAHO
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State Overview

MARCH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE UNCHANGED AT 2.8 PERCENT

Labor force details for the state, labor market areas, counties and cities can be found in State Table 1 on page 3.

Idaho's employment picture was stable in March with the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate holding steady at a record-low 2.8 percent. There was little change from February in the number of people employed and unemployed. Nationally, unemployment decreased a tenth to 4.4 percent.

Idaho's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate has been under 4 percent for 23 months in a row, remaining below the national rate since October 2001.

In March, Idaho had the sixth lowest unemployment rate in the nation. Montana had the lowest at 2 percent. That was followed by Utah at 2.4 percent, Hawaii at 2.5 and Nebraska and Wyoming at 2.6 percent.

February's strong employment growth drove state unemployment below 3 percent for the first time ever, giving way to the same stability and seasonal patterns that marked Idaho's employment picture through the last half of 2006.

Total employment remained above 700,000 for the 26th consecutive month with just a slight decrease in the number of people working. Those without jobs rose by only 200 to 21,400.

Year over year, 13,200 more people were at work in Idaho than in March 2006. Employer demand for qualified workers to meet the needs of Idaho's growing population is fueling employment growth, reducing the number of unemployed by 5,100 from one year earlier.

Every Idaho county reported a drop in the number of unemployed people since March 2006.

But Idaho's year-over-year employment growth rate was only slightly higher than the national rate and markedly below the growth rates of recent months. That primarily reflects the fact that employment is now being compared to the very strong employment situation that Idaho began seeing heading into spring 2006.

Record-low unemployment has created a tight job market. However, the growing population is keeping the economy expanding so that Idaho remains one of the nation's strongest and most vital states.

AREA LABOR FORCE HIGHLIGHTS

Unemployment rates are calculated each month for 10 labor market areas in Idaho — Boise-Nampa, Pocatello, Idaho Falls, Lewiston, Coeur d'Alene, Burley, Rexburg, Twin Falls, Grangeville and Hailey. Table 1 on page 3 lists the counties included in each area.

Five had unemployment rates in over 3 percent. Grangeville had the highest at 4.1 percent. Burley was at 3.6 percent, Lewiston at 3.5 percent and Pocatello and Coeur d'Alene at 3.1 percent each.

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Hailey had the lowest unemployment rate at 1.9 percent. Idaho Falls and Rexburg were at 2.3 percent. The Boise metropolitan area was at 2.6 percent and Twin Falls at 2.7 percent.

The March unemployment rates for all the labor market areas were below the year-ago levels.

COUNTY LABOR FORCE

Only one county reported an unemployment rate above 7 percent — Clearwater at 7.4 percent. Only three others experienced rates over 5 percent — Adams, Boundary and Benewah.

Twenty-one of Idaho's counties reported unemployment rates at or below 3 percent in March. The rates ranged from 3 percent in Bannock, Bingham and Nez Perce counties to 1.3 percent in Teton County.

NONFARM JOBS HIGHLIGHTS

Nonfarm payroll jobs continued to grow in March, reaching 642,900. That was up 1 percent over the month. The number of jobs in March was 6,100 more than February and 17,200 more than March 2006. Service industries gained 5,300 jobs month-to-month while the goods-producing industries gained 800. State Table 2 on page 7 contains details.

With the March data, nonfarm job growth in the first quarter was 3.6 percent over the first three months of 2006, more than double the national rate of less than 1.6 percent. Idaho's growing population and expansion in the retail and health care sectors drove job creation. Nonfarm jobs averaged 637,100 during the quarter. Idaho's growth rate ranked fifth nationally behind Utah, Louisiana, Arizona and Wyoming, all of which posted increases of more than 4 percent.

Construction, retail trade, health care, administrative services and food services, all responding to the population increase, added thousands of new jobs. Over 1,000 came in construction last month, the first increase in that sector since August 2006. Over 60 percent of the growth was in specialty trades, which are an integral part of commercial and residential building. Reports from across the state indicate commercial and residential construction is experiencing a resurgence.

The opening of several national chains throughout the state added 1,200 jobs in retail trade during March, rebounding from the loss of jobs occurring after the holiday season. Good weather also boosted job opportunities in the building materials and garden supply sector.

Temporary employment and janitorial services provided most of the 1,500 new jobs in administrative services. Food service jobs continue to grow, again one of those sectors affected by population growth.

POPULATION AND NONFARM JOB GROWTH

Recent U.S. Census Bureau estimates of county population for 2006 compared to estimates for prior years shows population growth drives some industry expansion.

The state population in July 2006 was 1,466,465, an increase of over 37,000 people or 2.6 percent increase over the 2005.

The population began increasing at a faster rate in 2004, about the same time jobs starting increasing again after no growth in 2002 and less than 1 percent growth in 2003. Over the four years between 2003 and 2006, Idaho's population grew by just under 100,000 people, or 7.2 percent, while nonfarm jobs increased over 68,000, nearly 12 percent. The real tale is where the job growth was — in industries that are influenced by population growth.

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In just the last two years, Idaho has added 72,000 people. With that growth came over 52,000 jobs.

The economy is split between the service sector and the goods-producing sector. The number of jobs in the service sector between 2003 and 2006 increased by 48,000. Contributors to this growth included retail trade, administrative and support services, education, health care, finance and real estate services.

Three-fourths of the new jobs in the goods producing sector were in construction. As more people move to Idaho, they need more places to live, shop, do business, work and go to school. The result is 15,000 new construction jobs.

As construction increases, jobs in many other industries also increase — finance, real estate, building materials, home furnishings and engineering just to name a few. Firms engaged in civil and environmental engineering, doing research and design for new subdivisions or commercial developments, added nearly 1,000 jobs during those four years.

New homes and businesses need people and things. The finance and real estate sectors together added about 5,000 jobs between 2003 and 2006 to serve the people buying new homes and buildings. As for the things, about 18 percent of the service sector jobs were in retail, providing food, clothing, furnishings, garden supplies and hardwood, automobiles and many other items.

The demand for housing has also fueled a job increase in mobile home and prefab building production. In addition to potential home owners, schools with enrollment explosions buy portables, and businesses use portables when they run out of space, sometimes as permanent fixtures. Clearly, growth in one industry has a trickle down effect on many others.

Administrative and support services added nearly 7,000 jobs during the period, some in call centers, temporary employment agencies and landscape services.

With the growth in population comes an increased demand for educational facilities, which leads to more job opportunities. In the four years following the national recession, just under 4,200 jobs were added in both public and private education. School districts are still scrambling to build new facilities and staff them. With many educators reaching retirement age and better-paying jobs opening up in other sectors, the number of new jobs in education will continue growing in the next few years. The growth in government jobs is largely in education.

Health care jobs continue to grow with the population. Doctors alone have added 1,200 jobs in their offices. But the fastest growing area of health care is outpatient care centers, where jobs rose 67 percent. Home health care added over 800 jobs. More people are staying in their

State Table 1: March 2007 Labor Force (preliminary)				
Seasonally Adjusted	Labor Force	Unemp.	% Unemp.	Total Emp.
Lewiston MSA	29,957	1,037	3.5	28,920
Nez Perce County	19,240	579	3.0	18,661
Asotin County, WA	10,717	459	4.3	10,258
Boise City-Nampa MSA	299,126	7,827	2.6	291,299
Ada County	199,120	4,769	2.4	194,351
Boise County	3,550	118	3.3	3,432
Canyon County	83,412	2,586	3.1	80,825
Gem County	7,858	253	3.2	7,605
Owyhee County	5,186	101	1.9	5,085
Pocatello MSA	44,028	1,361	3.1	42,667
Bannock County	40,013	1,209	3.0	38,805
Power County	4,015	153	3.8	3,862
Idaho Falls MSA	58,820	1,366	2.3	57,453
Bonneville County	48,471	1,101	2.3	47,370
Jefferson County	10,349	265	2.6	10,083
Coeur d'Alene MSA*	70,318	2,212	3.1	68,107
Burley MicSA	18,880	683	3.6	18,197
Cassia County	9,744	319	3.3	9,425
Minidoka County	9,136	364	4.0	8,773
Rexburg MicSA	21,546	492	2.3	21,054
Fremont County	6,593	167	2.5	6,427
Madison County	14,952	326	2.2	14,627
Twin Falls MicSA	47,785	1,314	2.7	46,471
Jerome County	10,099	287	2.8	9,812
Twin Falls County	37,687	1,028	2.7	36,659
Grangeville SLMA	8,782	364	4.1	8,419
Idaho County	7,040	322	4.6	6,718
Lewis County	1,742	41	2.4	1,701
Hailey SLMA	14,904	280	1.9	14,624
Blaine County	14,278	270	1.9	14,009
Camas County	626	11	1.7	616
Adams County	2,080	110	5.3	1,970
Bear Lake County	3,114	80	2.6	3,034
Benewah County	4,318	219	5.1	4,099
Blackfoot MicSA (Bingham County)	20,250	613	3.0	19,637
Bonner County	21,058	734	3.5	20,324
Boundary County	4,170	214	5.1	3,956
Butte County	1,101	42	3.8	1,060
Caribou County	3,495	119	3.4	3,376
Clark County	529	14	2.6	516
Clearwater County	3,141	234	7.4	2,907
Custer County	2,372	83	3.5	2,289
Mountain Home MicSA (Elmore County)	11,114	382	3.4	10,732
Franklin County	6,521	142	2.2	6,378
Gooding County	8,309	177	2.1	8,132
Moscow MicSA (Latah County)	17,358	373	2.1	16,986
Lemhi County	3,813	174	4.6	3,639
Lincoln County	2,358	74	3.2	2,284
Oneida County	2,357	44	1.9	2,313
Payette County	10,620	382	3.6	10,238
Shoshone County	5,711	276	4.8	5,434
Teton County	4,918	65	1.3	4,852
Valley County	4,992	180	3.6	4,813
Washington County	5,308	202	3.8	5,107
State of Idaho	752,439	21,411	2.8	731,028
Idaho Cities				
Boise	116,313	2,983	2.6	113,329
Caldwell	22,602	725	3.2	21,878
Coeur d'Alene	27,285	716	2.6	26,569
Idaho Falls	16,281	477	2.9	15,804
Lewiston	36,612	1,202	3.3	35,409
Meridian	28,939	886	3.1	28,053
Nampa	20,979	623	3.0	20,357
Pocatello	29,786	801	2.7	28,986
Twin Falls	17,334	657	3.8	16,677

* Coeur d'Alene MSA includes all of Kootenai County.

homes when ill for a variety of reasons — it's cheaper, it's more comfortable and hospitals are limiting stays. In most cases, these growth areas are population driven. The more people there are, the more health facilities are needed to care for them. The shift in focus to outpatient care has slowed job growth in hospitals

COUNTY POPULATION & NONFARM GROWTH

Job growth seems tied to population growth as the statistics on both for the seven counties with the highest 2005-2006 population increases suggest. In most cases, population growth has played a major role, and construction was a common thread.

Valley County had the largest percentage increase. The addition of 526 people resulted in a 6.3 percent growth. As for nonfarm jobs between 2005 and 2006, the industry breakdown included:

- » Construction, 150.
- » Finance and real estate, 70.
- » Accommodations and food service, 110 with the growth being evenly split between the two groups.
- » Health services, 60 focused on doctor offices.

Canyon County added 8,321 people, a 5 percent increase, and for workers:

- » Construction led the way with 1,100 new jobs.
- » Administrative and support services added 500 primarily in employment agencies and services to buildings.
- » Retail trade rose 350 before the explosion of retail outlets at Treasure Valley Marketplace in early 2007.
- » Other services added 250 jobs with the majority in civic and social organizations. There was a new YMCA, and Mission Aviation Fellowship moved its headquarters.

Teton County added 344 people, a 4.6 percent increase, and:

- » Construction added 160 jobs.
- » Professional and technical services added 70 with the majority in engineering services.
- » Wholesale trade employment more than doubled with 30 new jobs.

Ada County added 13,617 people, a 3.9 percent increase, and:

- » Construction generated 2,400 new jobs.
- » Retail trade came in second with 1,100 new jobs. The building materials and garden supplies area rose 240 jobs.
- » Food service added 800 jobs.
- » Finance and real estate added 700 jobs.
- » Only management of corporations lost jobs, but that was less than 50.

Jefferson County added 737 people, a 3.4 percent increase, and:

- » Construction added 100 jobs.
- » Health care added 60.

- » Trade added 50 jobs – 30 in retail and 20 in wholesale

Bonneville County added 2,928 people, a 3.2 percent increase, and:

- » Construction added 500 jobs.
- » Retail trade added 200 across the board.
- » Food service added 150 jobs with the majority in full-service restaurants.
- » Transportation and warehousing added 150 jobs with more than half at a new distribution center.
- » Finance added 100 jobs.

Kootenai County added 3,785 people, a 3 percent increase, and:

- » Construction added 500 jobs.
- » Retail trade added 500 jobs with increases in all areas.
- » Finance and real estate grew by 220 jobs.
- » Manufacturing added 200 jobs with increases in all sectors.
- » Food services added 200 jobs primarily in restaurants.

Twin Falls County added 2,035 people, a 2.9 percent increase, and:

- Retail trade added 300 jobs. There were increases in all areas, but building and garden supplies dealers posted the largest.
- Construction added 180 jobs.
- Health care added 170 jobs with about 100 in hospitals.
- Manufacturing added 150 jobs with the majority in transportation equipment.

Population data for 1969 through 2006 is available at <http://lmi.idaho.gov>. Population data for 2003 through 2006 can be found on State Table 4 on page 9.

INCOME

Statistics on income and wages are two of the most frequently requested labor market data items. The most recent figures, personal and per capita income for 2005 for the metropolitan statistical areas and counties, was released in April.

Income and how it is measured provide some insight into what is happening in the economy and what might happen down the road. But knowing what analysts mean when they talk about personal income and per capita personal income is often a challenge.

Personal income is the total of net earnings by place of residence, personal current transfer receipts such as Social Security and rental, dividend and interest income. Per capita personal income is the personal income of a given geographic area divided by its population. These income estimates are compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis at the national, state, regional, metro-

politan, non-metropolitan and county levels. Annual county estimates are available from 1969 through 2005. These comprehensive, long-term economic data provide a consistent basis to measure and compare economic activity for Idaho and its counties.

Per capita income is often used as a simple measure of the wealth or purchasing power of the population of an area in comparison to other areas. The income estimates provide one of the best ways of understanding growth, decline and other changes in local economies. Trends in the major components — earned income, property income and transfer payments — help gauge the changing structure, performance and composition of local economies.

Earned income consists of compensation for services including wages, salaries, benefits and proprietors' income. Contributions to government social insurance such as Medicare are subtracted, and an adjustment is made to convert earnings from the place of work to the place of residence. That adjustment reflects commuting patterns between counties.

Property income represents payment of dividends, interest and rents to people with capital assets, adjusted for the depreciation of those assets.

Transfer payments represent payments to persons and nonprofit institutions for which no current services are performed. These include government payments for retirement and disability insurance benefits, medical payments like Medicare and Medicaid, unemployment insurance, welfare, veterans' benefits and federal grants and loans to students. Business transfer payments primarily include corporate gifts to nonprofit institutions and liability payments for personal injury. Farm-related transfer payments are not included here but are counted in farm proprietors' income.

The only 2006 income data available is for the nation and the state. A recap of that information shows the nation's per capita income was \$36,276, up 5.2 percent from \$34,471 in 2005, while Idaho's per capita income increased 5.2 percent from \$28,478 in 2005 to \$29,952. Idaho's per capita income ranked 43rd in 2006 and was 82.6 percent of the national level.

AREA INCOME

State Table 5 on page 10 provides personal income and per capita income for the United States, Idaho, the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan portions of Idaho and the smaller micropolitan areas for 2003, 2004 and 2005. This includes information on three areas that share boundaries with other states — Logan, Utah, which includes Franklin County; Jackson, Wyo., which includes Teton County; and Ontario, Ore., which includes Payette County. State Table 6 on page 11 provides the same data for Idaho's 44 counties.

Personal income in three out of Idaho's five metropolitan statistical areas grew faster than the national rate from 2004 to 2005. The Boise metropolitan area that includes Nampa and the Coeur d'Alene and Idaho Falls urban centers had personal income increases well above the 5.2 percent national average. Only two out of the five areas, Boise and Pocatello, experienced per capita income gains that topped the national average of 4.2 percent.

The estimates released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis show Boise metropolitan's personal income had the greatest increase at 8.3 percent. Coeur d'Alene had the next highest growth rate, jumping by 7.5 percent, and Idaho Falls at 6.6 percent.

The Pocatello and Lewiston areas were the only urban areas which did not exceed the national average for personal income growth. The Pocatello area grew by 4.7 percent, and Lewiston's grew by only 3.1 percent.

Idaho's economic expansion, fueled by the recent population boom, was in full force during 2005, and that trend should continue in the near term. New businesses are locating in Idaho and are taking advantage of an attractive business climate ripe for economic development. The increase in both personal and per capita income was due to a combination of factors including strong construction activity, which helped boost employment and wages, and the recovery of the manufacturing and high-tech sectors following significant declines from the 2001 national recession.

Income estimates were made for 361 metropolitan statistical areas across the country.

Personal income for Coeur d'Alene totaled more than \$3.4 billion in 2005, Idaho Falls was at \$3.18 billion and Pocatello was just over \$2.1 billion. The Boise-Nampa area had the state's highest personal income at just over \$17.7 billion. Lewiston had the lowest metropolitan total at less than \$1.7 billion.

On a per capita basis, the Boise-Nampa area had the state's highest metropolitan average at \$32,527 while Pocatello had the lowest average at \$25,048. Nation-wide, average per-capita income was \$34,471.

The economic expansion also had a positive impact on personal income in some of the smaller micropolitan areas in Idaho. The estimates show Twin Fall's personal income had the greatest increase at 5.3 percent. The Rexburg area was next, increasing by 4.6 percent. The other areas fell short of the national growth rate — Moscow and Mountain Home at 3.2, Blackfoot at 2.7 percent and Burley with the smallest growth rate at 1.8 percent.

On a per capita basis, the Moscow area was highest at \$26,458, just slightly above the Twin Falls area at \$26,428. Rexburg was lowest at \$17,813.

COUNTY PERSONAL INCOME

The bureau also provided personal income data for Idaho counties, and the figures showed slower growth in the nonmetropolitan areas of the state. Personal income rose 4.4 percent in the rural counties compared to 7.5 percent in the urban ones. This was a significant turnaround from 2004 when personal income was up just 9.8 percent from 2003 in both the metropolitan and non-metropolitan counties.

There were no counties where 2005 growth was higher than in 2004, and five counties posted a decline in personal income.

Here are the highlights from the 2005 personal income data:

- » Ada County had the highest personal income at \$13.576 billion.
- » Valley County had the largest percentage increase in personal income at 10 percent.
- » Clark County had the lowest personal income at \$23 million.
- » Owyhee County had the smallest percentage increase, 0.2 percent, in personal income.
- » Personal income dropped in Clark by 8.6 percent, in Butte by 3.3 percent, in Custer by 2.3 percent, in Power by 1.9 percent and in Lincoln by 0.5 percent.
- » Eighteen counties had personal income growth above the national level.

COUNTY PER CAPITA INCOME

Per capita income estimates showed slower growth in the nonmetropolitan areas of the state. Per capita income rose 3.2 percent in the rural counties compared to 4.1 percent in the metropolitan areas. This was a significant turnaround as per capita income growth in rural Idaho slowed by nearly two-thirds from the 8.9 percent increase in 2004 while the urban areas were off less than half from a 7 percent increase.

The figures reflect the continued concentration of Idaho's economic expansion in the 11 counties that make up Idaho's metropolitan statistical areas: Ada, Canyon, Gem, Boise and Owyhee for the Boise metropolitan area; Bonneville and Jefferson for Idaho Falls; Bannock and Power for Pocatello; Kootenai for Coeur d'Alene and Nez Perce for Lewiston.

Only three counties posted a 2005 growth rate higher than in 2004 — Clearwater, Boise and Canyon. Bannock County's growth remained unchanged from 2004. The remaining 40 counties experienced slower growth. The five counties that saw personal income decline in 2005 also saw per capita income drop along with Boundary and Jefferson counties.

Here are the highlights from the 2005 per capita income data:

- » Blaine County, home to the Sun Valley Resort, continued to have Idaho's highest per capita income at \$52,245, up 5.9 percent from 2004.
- » Madison County, where thousands of Brigham Young University-Idaho students live, remained at the bottom of the list at \$16,489, an increase of 2.5 percent from 2004.
- » Adams County cracked the top 10 with 2005 per capita income of \$26,612, up another 3.6 percent after rising over 9.4 percent in 2004. It demonstrated the economic impact of the Tamarack Resort and high-end housing development occurring in Valley and Adams counties.
- » Clearwater County had the largest percentage increase in per capita income at 6.4 percent.
- » Owyhee County had the smallest percentage increase at 0.04 percent.
- » Per capita income declined by 6.8 percent in Clark, 5.3 percent in Lincoln, 2.3 percent in Power, 2 percent in Custer and Butte, 1.4 percent in Boundary and 0.4 percent in Jefferson.
- » Twelve counties had per capita income growth above the national level.

More information on personal and per capita income can be found on the Bureau of Economic Analysis Web site at <http://www.bea.gov>. Click on Regional for county and area data not only for Idaho but for all states. Idaho data is also at <http://lmi.idaho.gov>. Click on Income on the left side of the screen.

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State Table 2: Nonfarm Payroll Jobs

BY PLACE OF WORK	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	Last Month	Last Year
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	642,900	636,800	625,700	1.0	2.7
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	118,600	117,800	115,900	0.7	2.3
<i>Natural Resources & Mining</i>	3,800	3,900	3,700	-2.6	2.7
Logging	1,500	1,700	1,600	-11.8	-6.3
Mining	2,300	2,200	2,100	4.5	9.5
Metal Ore Mining	800	800	800	0.0	0.0
<i>Construction</i>	48,900	47,800	47,600	2.3	2.7
<i>Manufacturing</i>	65,900	66,100	64,600	-0.3	2.0
Durable Goods	43,500	43,600	41,600	-0.2	4.6
Wood Product Manufacturing	8,000	8,000	8,100	0.0	-1.2
Sawmills & Wood Preservation	2,500	2,500	2,300	0.0	8.7
Veneer & Engineered Products	1,600	1,600	1,900	0.0	-15.8
Other Wood Product Manufacturing	3,900	3,900	3,900	0.0	0.0
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	4,500	4,500	4,200	0.0	7.1
Machinery Manufacturing	2,900	2,900	2,800	0.0	3.6
Computer & Electronic Product Manufacturing	17,100	17,200	16,400	-0.6	4.3
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,500	3,400	2,900	2.9	20.7
Other Durable Goods	7,500	7,600	7,200	-1.3	4.2
Nondurable Goods	22,400	22,500	23,000	-0.4	-2.6
Food Manufacturing	14,000	14,100	14,600	-0.7	-4.1
Fruits & Vegetable Preserving & Specialty	6,900	6,800	7,400	1.5	-6.8
Paper Manufacturing	1,500	1,600	1,500	-6.3	0.0
Printing & Related Support Activities	1,900	1,900	1,900	0.0	0.0
Chemical Manufacturing	2,100	2,100	2,100	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	2,900	2,800	2,900	3.6	0.0
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	524,300	519,000	509,800	1.0	2.8
<i>Trade, Transportation, & Utilities</i>	129,200	127,600	124,300	1.3	3.9
Trade	109,400	107,900	104,600	1.4	4.6
Wholesale Trade	27,500	27,200	26,800	1.1	2.6
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	12,900	12,800	12,300	0.8	4.9
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	11,900	11,800	11,800	0.8	0.8
Retail Trade	81,900	80,700	77,800	1.5	5.3
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	12,100	11,900	11,600	1.7	4.3
Building Material and Garden Equipment	9,700	9,300	9,500	4.3	2.1
Food & Beverage Stores	12,400	12,400	12,200	0.0	1.6
General Merchandise Stores	17,800	17,300	15,900	2.9	11.9
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	19,800	19,700	19,700	0.5	0.5
Utilities	2,100	2,000	1,900	5.0	10.5
Transportation & Warehousing	17,700	17,700	17,800	0.0	-0.6
Rail Transportation	1,300	1,300	1,300	0.0	0.0
Truck Transportation	9,200	9,200	8,900	0.0	3.4
<i>Information</i>	10,700	10,500	10,400	1.9	2.9
Telecommunications	3,800	3,700	3,800	2.7	0.0
<i>Financial Activities</i>	32,200	32,100	31,100	0.3	3.5
Finance & Insurance	23,500	23,400	22,800	0.4	3.1
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	8,700	8,700	8,300	0.0	4.8
<i>Professional & Business Services</i>	80,500	79,200	78,900	1.6	2.0
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	33,800	33,700	32,600	0.3	3.7
Scientific Research & Development	7,700	7,800	7,500	-1.3	2.7
Management of Companies & Enterprises	7,600	7,600	7,700	0.0	-1.3
Administrative & Support & Waste Management	39,100	37,900	38,600	3.2	1.3
Administrative & Support Services	38,000	36,500	37,300	4.1	1.9
<i>Educational & Health Services</i>	73,200	72,800	69,300	0.5	5.6
Educational Services	8,800	8,800	8,400	0.0	4.8
Health Care & Social Assistance	64,400	64,000	60,900	0.6	5.7
Hospitals	15,800	15,700	13,500	0.6	17.0
<i>Leisure & Hospitality</i>	60,500	59,600	57,400	1.5	5.4
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	8,100	8,000	7,500	1.3	8.0
Accommodation & Food Services	52,400	51,600	49,900	1.6	5.0
Accommodation	8,700	8,500	8,000	2.4	8.8
Food Services & Drinking Places	43,700	43,100	41,900	1.4	4.3
<i>Other Services</i>	18,900	18,700	18,600	1.1	1.6
<i>Total Government</i>	119,100	118,500	119,800	0.5	-0.6
Federal Government	11,600	11,500	12,000	0.9	-3.3
State & Local Government	107,500	107,000	107,800	0.5	-0.3
State Government	30,400	30,200	31,900	0.7	-4.7
State Government Education	14,800	14,700	16,900	0.7	-12.4
State Government Administration	15,600	15,500	15,000	0.6	4.0
Local Government	77,100	76,800	75,900	0.4	1.6
Local Government Education	41,700	41,400	40,300	0.7	3.5
Local Government Administration	32,200	32,300	32,800	-0.3	-1.8
Local Government Tribes	3,200	3,100	2,800	3.2	14.3

*Preliminary Estimate

** Estimates include all full or part time wage and salary workers who worked or received pay in the following industry groups during the pay period ending nearest the 12th of the month.

State Table 3: Economic Indicators

	Mar 2007	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
IDAHO LABOR FORCE ⁽¹⁾					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	752,400	753,900	744,300	-0.2	1.1
Unemployment	21,400	21,200	26,500	0.9	-19.2
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	2.8	2.8	3.6		
Total Employment	731,000	732,700	717,800	-0.2	1.8
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	747,600	749,000	741,600	-0.2	0.8
Unemployment	27,500	28,200	32,000	-2.5	-14.1
Percent of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	3.8	4.3		
Total Employment	720,100	720,800	709,600	-0.1	1.5
U. S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE ⁽²⁾	4.4	4.5	4.7		
U.S. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX ⁽²⁾					
Urban Wage Earners & Clerical Workers (CPI-W)	200.6	198.5	195.3	1.0	2.7
All Urban Consumer (CPI-U)	205.4	203.5	199.8	0.9	2.8
AGRICULTURE					
Agriculture Employment	36,210	35,580	37,790	1.8	-4.2
Operators	9,740	9,740	9,740	0.0	0.0
Unpaid Family	360	360	360	0.0	0.0
Hired Workers	26,110	25,480	27,690	2.5	-5.7
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE					
<i>Claims Activities</i>					
Initial Claims ⁽³⁾	7,216	7,885	7,409	-8.5	-2.6
Weeks Claimed ⁽⁴⁾	65,612	76,514	67,565	-14.2	-2.9
<i>Benefit Payment Activities⁽⁵⁾</i>					
Weeks Compensated	57,495	66,633	57,178	-13.7	0.6
Total Benefit \$ Paid	\$14,163,436	\$16,233,431	\$13,554,898	-12.8	4.5
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$246.34	\$243.62	\$237.06	1.1	3.9
Covered Employers	47,511	40,359	44,439	17.7	6.9
Total Benefit \$ Paid During Last 12 Months ⁽⁴⁾	\$112,156,372	\$111,547,835	\$122,619,709	0.5	-8.5

(1) Preliminary Estimate

(2) Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

(3) Includes all entitlements/programs on Intrastate and Interstate Agent, New, and Additional Claims

(4) Includes all entitlements/programs, Intrastate and Interstate Agent

(5) Includes all entitlements/programs, Total Liable Activities

State Table 4: Idaho County Population

County	Jul 2003	Jul 2004	Jul 2005	Jul 2006	2005-2006 % Change	2005-2006 # Change	Rank
Ada County	325,247	332,419	345,418	359,035	3.9	13,617	1
Adams County	3,466	3,491	3,542	3,485	-1.6	-57	41
Bannock County	77,023	77,785	77,794	78,443	0.8	649	5
Bear Lake County	6,316	6,255	6,180	6,167	-0.2	-13	36
Benewah County	9,006	9,012	9,165	9,347	2.0	182	28
Bingham County	42,912	43,126	43,775	44,051	0.6	276	7
Blaine County	20,680	21,023	21,173	21,501	1.5	328	16
Boise County	7,230	7,357	7,440	7,641	2.7	201	33
Bonner County	39,128	39,801	40,736	41,275	1.3	539	8
Bonneville County	87,118	89,697	91,702	94,630	3.2	2,928	4
Boundary County	10,169	10,384	10,563	10,831	2.5	268	26
Butte County	2,847	2,819	2,782	2,781	0.0	-1	42
Camas County	1,034	1,015	1,064	1,088	2.3	24	43
Canyon County	151,857	157,889	164,981	173,302	5.0	8,321	2
Caribou County	7,193	7,212	7,094	6,996	-1.4	-98	35
Cassia County	21,522	21,379	21,391	21,365	-0.1	-26	15
Clark County	910	932	914	920	0.7	6	44
Clearwater County	8,438	8,367	8,338	8,324	-0.2	-14	29
Custer County	4,118	4,107	4,097	4,180	2.0	83	39
Elmore County	28,702	28,788	28,298	28,114	-0.7	-184	12
Franklin County	11,846	12,160	12,410	12,494	0.7	84	23
Fremont County	12,158	12,330	12,224	12,369	1.2	145	24
Gem County	15,765	15,937	16,265	16,558	1.8	293	19
Gooding County	14,329	14,406	14,424	14,404	-0.1	-20	21
Idaho County	15,430	15,637	15,659	15,762	0.7	103	20
Jefferson County	20,217	20,827	21,613	22,350	3.4	737	14
Jerome County	18,927	19,303	19,677	20,130	2.3	453	17
Kootenai County	117,503	122,375	127,722	131,507	3.0	3,785	3
Latah County	34,884	35,052	34,990	35,029	0.1	39	10
Lemhi County	7,748	7,827	7,868	7,930	0.8	62	31
Lewis County	3,738	3,717	3,739	3,756	0.5	17	40
Lincoln County	4,294	4,315	4,532	4,522	-0.2	-10	37
Madison County	29,732	30,326	31,207	31,393	0.6	186	11
Minidoka County	19,327	19,166	18,996	19,041	0.2	45	18
Nez Perce County	37,627	37,724	38,008	38,324	0.8	316	9
Oneida County	4,119	4,146	4,178	4,176	0.0	-2	38
Owyhee County	11,098	11,021	11,037	11,104	0.6	67	25
Payette County	21,455	21,551	22,114	22,595	2.2	481	13
Power County	7,516	7,724	7,761	7,914	2.0	153	32
Shoshone County	12,965	12,863	13,038	13,180	1.1	142	22
Teton County	7,050	7,197	7,494	7,838	4.6	344	34
Twin Falls County	67,044	68,080	69,540	71,575	2.9	2,035	6
Valley County	7,751	7,935	8,310	8,836	6.3	526	30
Washington County	9,989	10,047	10,114	10,202	0.9	88	27

State of Idaho	1,367,428	1,394,524	1,429,367	1,466,465
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Released by U.S. Census Bureau. March 2007

Table 5: Idaho Personal Income and Per Capita Personal Income by Metropolitan & Micropolitan Area

Area Name	Personal Income (millions of dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²	Per Capital Personal Income (dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²
	2003	2004	2005		2003	2004	2005	
United States¹	9,150,320	9,716,351	10,220,942	5.2	31,466	33,090	34,471	4.2
Metropolitan portion	7,977,094	8,476,476	8,924,022	5.3	33,010	34,700	36,140	4.1
Nonmetropolitan portion	1,173,226	1,239,875	1,296,920	4.6	23,875	25,121	26,161	4.1
Idaho	34,816	38,229	40,706	6.5	25,461	27,414	28,478	3.9
Metropolitan Portion	23,608	25,923	27,861	7.5	27,134	29,032	30,213	4.1
Nonmetropolitan Portion	11,208	12,306	12,845	4.4	22,534	24,534	25,325	3.2
METROPOLITAN AREAS								
Boise City-Nampa, ID	14,909	16,372	17,732	8.3	29,164	31,207	32,527	4.2
Coeur d'Alene	2,859	3,205	3,445	7.5	24,330	26,191	26,970	3.0
Idaho Falls	2,725	2,983	3,179	6.6	25,388	26,991	28,054	3.9
Lewiston, ID-WA (Asotin Co)	1,532	1,611	1,662	3.1	26,327	27,496	28,135	2.3
Logan, UT-ID (Franklin Co)	2,201	2,392	2,504	4.7	20,294	21,958	22,609	3.0
Pocatello	1,899	2,045	2,143	4.8	22,462	23,914	25,048	4.7
MICROPOLITAN AREAS								
Blackfoot	847	919	944	2.7	19,737	21,311	21,569	1.2
Burley	842	904	920	1.8	20,620	22,294	22,777	2.2
Jackson, WY-ID (Teton Co)	1,625	1,789	1,873	4.7	63,133	68,360	70,626	3.3
Moscow	828	897	926	3.2	23,727	25,592	26,458	3.4
Mountain Home	657	707	730	3.2	22,875	24,558	25,786	5.0
Ontario, OR-ID (Payette Co)	1,077	1,135	1,207	6.4	20,399	21,479	22,609	5.3
Rexburg	670	740	774	4.6	15,995	17,340	17,813	2.7
Twin Falls	2,058	2,239	2,358	5.3	23,936	25,618	26,428	3.2

Released by Bureau of Economic Analysis April 26, 2007.

¹ - Per capita income was computed using Census bureau midyear population estimates.² - Per change calculated from unrounded data.

Table 6: Idaho Personal Income and Per Capita Personal Income by Idaho County, 2003-2005 (cont. on page 11)

Area Name	Personal Income (millions of dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²	Per Capital Personal Income (dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²	Rank in State
	2003	2004	2005		2003	2004	2005		
United States¹	9,150,320	9,716,351	10,220,942	5.2	31,466	33,090	34,471	4.2	
Metropolitan portion	7,977,094	8,476,476	8,924,022	5.3	33,010	34,700	36,140	4.1	
Nonmetropolitan portion	1,173,226	1,239,875	1,296,920	4.6	23,875	25,121	26,161	4.1	
Idaho	34,816	38,229	40,706	6.5	25,461	27,414	28,478	3.9	
Metropolitan Portion	23,608	25,923	27,861	7.5	27,134	29,032	30,213	4.1	
Nonmetropolitan Portion	11,208	12,306	12,845	4.4	22,534	24,534	25,325	3.2	
Counties									
Ada	11,322	12,498	13,576	7.8	34,811	37,596	39,302	4.5	2
Adams	81	90	94	6.0	23,474	25,688	26,612	3.6	10
Bannock	1,764	1,878	1,979	6.4	22,898	24,137	25,436	5.4	17
Bear Lake	122	131	134	6.1	19,374	20,965	21,648	3.3	34
Benewah	194	212	224	9.5	21,538	23,547	24,394	3.6	23
Bingham	847	919	944	10.2	19,737	21,311	21,569	1.2	35
Blaine	914	1,037	1,106	7.1	44,214	49,333	52,245	5.9	1
Boise	164	174	185	5.2	22,631	23,589	24,856	5.4	20
Bonner	843	939	1,012	7.8	21,546	23,581	24,844	5.4	21
Bonneville	2,331	2,538	2,718	7.8	26,756	28,290	29,642	4.8	5
Boundary	185	199	199	7.6	18,187	19,153	18,885	-1.4	43

Table 6: Idaho Personal Income and Per Capita Personal Income by Idaho County, 2003-2005 (cont. from pg. 10)

Area Name	Personal Income (millions of dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²	Per Capital Personal Income (dollars)			Percent Change 2004-2005 ²	Rank in State
	2003	2004	2005		2003	2004	2005		
United States ¹	9,150,320	9,716,351	10,220,942	5.2	31,466	33,090	34,471	4.2	
Metropolitan portion	7,977,094	8,476,476	8,924,022	5.3	33,010	34,700	36,140	4.1	
Nonmetropolitan portion	1,173,226	1,239,875	1,296,920	4.6	23,875	25,121	26,161	4.1	
Idaho	34,816	38,229	40,706	6.5	25,461	27,414	28,478	3.9	
Metropolitan Portion	23,608	25,923	27,861	7.5	27,134	29,032	30,213	4.1	
Nonmetropolitan Portion	11,208	12,306	12,845	4.4	22,534	24,534	25,325	3.2	
Counties									
Butte	59	68	66	10.7	20,747	24,087	23,613	-2.0	26
Camas	24	26	28	7.7	23,196	25,970	26,577	2.3	11
Canyon	2,907	3,119	3,365	8.3	19,142	19,754	20,397	3.3	40
Caribou	162	178	179	9.8	22,529	24,749	25,257	2.1	18
Cassia	500	525	538	6.4	23,217	24,557	25,166	2.5	19
Clark	22	25	23	0.3	24,330	26,494	24,697	-6.8	22
Clearwater	193	201	213	6.3	22,878	24,044	25,585	6.4	16
Custer	93	98	95	6.8	22,600	23,792	23,301	-2.1	28
Elmore	657	707	730	7.8	22,875	24,558	25,786	5.0	15
Franklin	232	266	279	13.2	19,601	21,876	22,472	2.7	30
Fremont (includes Yellowstone Park)	225	252	259	9.9	18,518	20,406	21,192	3.9	38
Gem	305	338	363	8.6	19,360	21,225	22,289	5.0	32
Gooding	373	437	445	19.4	26,033	30,306	30,857	1.8	4
Idaho	308	337	349	8.1	19,936	21,524	22,292	3.6	31
Jefferson	394	446	461	11.1	19,493	21,395	21,315	-0.4	37
Jerome	455	517	536	16.1	24,038	26,803	27,249	1.7	8
Latah	828	897	926	7.8	23,727	25,592	26,458	3.4	12
Lemhi	163	182	184	7.8	21,056	23,269	23,375	0.5	27
Lewis	92	102	104	14.4	24,567	27,472	27,922	1.6	7
Lincoln	85	97	97	13.1	19,788	22,507	21,318	-5.3	36
Madison	445	488	515	8.1	14,963	16,094	16,489	2.5	44
Minidoka	343	379	382	8.0	17,727	19,769	20,086	1.6	41
Nez Perce	984	1,052	1,083	5.6	26,161	27,884	28,504	2.2	6
Oneida	71	76	80	6.9	17,266	18,287	19,056	4.2	42
Owyhee	211	243	244	11.4	19,005	22,080	22,089	0.0	33
Payette	459	502	531	5.6	21,387	23,296	24,025	3.1	24
Power	135	167	164	18.2	17,986	21,661	21,154	-2.3	39
Shoshone	291	321	340	7.1	22,470	24,937	26,050	4.5	14
Teton	143	167	179	13.8	20,224	23,155	23,918	3.3	25
Twin Falls	1,603	1,721	1,822	7.1	23,907	25,282	26,196	3.6	13
Valley	228	258	284	9.0	29,412	32,480	34,126	5.1	3
Washington	201	220	228	6.6	20,095	21,863	22,548	3.1	29

Released by Bureau of Economic Analysis April 26, 2007.

¹ - Per capita income was computed using Census bureau midyear population estimates.² - Per change calculated from unrounded data.



Panhandle News

BENEWAH, BONNER, BOUNDARY, KOOTENAI & SHOSHONE COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

For almost two decades now, Kootenai County has seen a steady increase in monthly employment. In fact, July and August 2002 are the only two months since January 1988 when employment fell below the year-earlier level. That was fallout from the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks when tourism took a big tumble, and manufacturing and Internet-related companies had posted significant job losses from the recession and the bursting of the dot-com bubble.

By contrast, the national economy has experienced 44 months during the 1991-1992 and 2001-2003 recessions when nonfarm payrolls were lower than the same month the year before. In that period, Kootenai County seemed oblivious to the nation's economic problems.

Bonner County has been almost as fortunate, experiencing only 10 months since January 1988 when its employment was lower than it had been a year earlier – in 1991 during the recession, in 1999 and 2000 when catalog retailer Coldwater Creek laid off workers and the timber industry had problems and in April 2003 when a K-Mart closed and weather conditions were bad.

On the other hand, with their high dependence on the volatile lumber industry, Benewah and Boundary counties have suffered longer runs of below-year-earlier employment than the nation did. Benewah County had 54 of those months and Boundary County 50. Whenever lumber prices dropped – during the 1991 recession, during the trade volatility of 1998-2000 and during 2002-2004 when housing activity was depressed and competition from Canada was intense – Benewah County experienced a downturn. Boundary County's economy also turned down

Panhandle Table 1: Coeur d'Alene MSA Labor Force & Employment
Kootenai County

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2007	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	70,320	70,100	68,990	0.3	1.9
Unemployed	2,210	2,230	2,630	-0.9	-16.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.1	3.2	3.8		
Total Employment	68,110	67,870	66,360	0.4	2.6
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	68,950	69,040	67,870	-0.1	1.6
Unemployed	3,030	3,270	3,390	-7.3	-10.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.4	4.7	5.0		
Total Employment	65,920	65,770	64,480	0.2	2.2
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	54,380	53,710	52,430	1.2	3.7
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	10,800	10,620	10,460	1.7	3.3
Natural Resources & Mining	420	450	410	-6.7	2.4
Construction	5,640	5,430	5,460	3.9	3.3
Manufacturing	4,740	4,740	4,590	0.0	3.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	980	970	980	1.0	0.0
Other Manufacturing	3,760	3,770	3,610	-0.3	4.2
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	43,580	43,090	41,970	1.1	3.8
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	10,560	10,460	9,770	1.0	8.1
Wholesale Trade	1,560	1,540	1,430	1.3	9.1
Retail Trade	7,870	7,770	7,300	1.3	7.8
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	1,130	1,150	1,040	-1.7	8.7
Information	950	940	980	1.1	-3.1
Financial Activities	3,010	3,000	2,800	0.3	7.5
Professional & Business Services	6,090	5,980	5,940	1.8	2.5
Educational & Health Services	5,330	5,300	5,260	0.6	1.3
Leisure & Hospitality	6,530	6,340	6,210	3.0	5.2
Other Services	1,440	1,420	1,440	1.4	0.0
Government Education	3,830	3,810	3,760	0.5	1.9
Government Administration	5,060	5,100	5,120	-0.8	-1.2
Government Tribes	780	740	690	5.4	13.0

* Preliminary estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

when lumber prices were low, but it suffered an additional dip in 2005 when the CEDU educational programs and schools closed.

But Shoshone County, which has struggled for more than two decades, had twice as many months of lower unemployment – 88 – than the nation. Employment trailed year-earlier levels through nearly all of 1991 when many mines closed and the lumber industry shrank. There were a few bad months in 1993 and 1997. Another round of mine closures and lumber downsizing started in September 1998 and lasted through the next year. There was only a brief respite before more mine layoffs and tough time for timber, tourism and manu-

facturing launched a string of 28 bad months through 2002. The last decline in March and April 2004 was modest, and since then, Shoshone County has seen its longest period of uninterrupted growth since the 1970s.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

THE RESERVATION AND BEYOND

The Coeur d'Alene Reservation encompasses western Benewah County including the cities of DeSmet and Plummer and southern Kootenai County including Worley. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe employs 500 people at its tribal headquarters, school, retail operations, farm and Benewah Medical & Wellness Center in Benewah County, and another 750 people at its tribal casino, hotel, golf course and convenience store in Worley. The success is notable. In 1996, the tribe employed just 256 people in Benewah County and 131 in Kootenai County. Where western Benewah County once had double-digit unemployment rates, the tribe has created so many job opportunities that it now has to import workers from Coeur d'Alene and Spokane by bus.

With the reservation's labor pool tapped out, the tribe recently decided to build a 100,000-square-foot manufacturing plant on 30 acres near the Kimball office furniture plant in Post Falls rather than on the reservation. The plant primarily will house a satellite operation of Berg Integrated Systems, which the tribe has held majority ownership in since last summer. Over the next few years, up to 150 workers could be hired to make mobile units for military and humanitarian organizations. After the tribe's purchase, Berg Integrated Systems moved from Coeur d'Alene to a 50,000-square-foot facility in Plummer and ramped up from six to 40 workers, mainly steel fabricators. After the Post Falls plant opens in early 2008, the Plummer facility will continue to serve as Berg Integrated Systems headquarters. The Post Falls facility also will provide space for expansion of two other Berg companies, which make tents and trailers in the Spokane Valley. There is a possibility that Berg will eventually move its 100 workers in the Spokane Valley to Post Falls.

Circling Raven, the Coeur d'Alene tribe's golf course in Worley, is getting great press. David Christenson, the club's golf director, was named one of the 20 "Most Admired Course Operators in the Nation" following a nationwide poll conducted by Golf Inc. magazine. The Golfer's World blog encouraged golfers to visit Circling Raven, which "has won tons of awards" since it opened.

BENEWAH COUNTY

- The St. Maries School District is one of 26 organizations nationwide to receive grants from the U.S. Forest Service for innovative uses of woody biomass. The school district received a \$250,000 grant to help pay for a new \$670,000 heating system for Heyburn Elementary School. By using wood waste rather than oil to heat the school, the district estimates it can save more than \$2 million over 30 years. The Panhandle Area Council, the region's lead economic development agency, is working with the district to secure the remaining financing for the new heating system.
- The Gem State Bar and Grill in St. Maries recently added an arcade geared toward teens. The arcade includes a pool table, jukebox, air hockey, foosball, race car and hunting video games and pinball machines.

BONNER COUNTY

- When the ski season ended on April 8, Schweitzer Mountain Resort near Sandpoint held a farewell party for the resort's first chairlift, which has carried skiers since the resort opened in 1963. This summer, the resort will add two high-speed lifts. The ski season that just ended was Schweitzer's best season ever.
- After last year's resounding success hosting the largest job fair ever in Bonner County, the Idaho Commerce & Labor office in Sandpoint and the Greater Sandpoint Chamber of Commerce again sponsored a career fair at the Bonner County Fairgrounds in Sandpoint. The 2007 Career Fair on May 2 helped 59 employers meet with more than 500 potential job applicants. Employers and job seekers alike appreciated the opportunities to meet each other, and it looks like the fair will be an annual event.
- North Idaho College plans to expand its registered nursing program into Bonner County this fall with the help of \$60,000 from the Idaho Legislature. The money will provide a classroom and laboratory for 10 nursing students and pay for two part-time instructors at the college's center in Ponderay. The college is partnering with Bonner General Hospital and other local health care facilities for on-site training. The expansion increases the number of spots available at the school's main campus in Coeur d'Alene, and will provide 10 more highly needed registered nurses per year.

- First Lutheran Church of Sandpoint plans to create a new senior housing development called Luther Park at Sandpoint next to the church but open to people of all faiths. The community for seniors offers catered living and enhanced residents' independence and provides proximity to work and shopping opportunities along with on-site health-care. The three-story development will contain 60 one- and two-bedroom units. Some will be specifically for memory care and enhanced assisted-living care. The development also will contain a grand fireplace in a large gathering area, a library and media center, community meeting rooms and a beauty and barber shop.
- Yoke's Fresh Market, a grocery store that anchors the Bonner Mall in Ponderay, soon will complete a \$3.5 million renovation that includes a new façade, signs and fresh paint. The renovation began last fall with new paint and signs on the outside of the store. In January, the store began interior work, renovating a department at a time so the store could remain open. Preparing for the grand re-opening on May 23, Yoke's has added 15 to 20 employees to its current work force of 100. It is also raising wages to the levels paid at the 11 Yoke's stores in Washington state. For many Yoke's employees, that means an increase of a dollar or more an hour. New employees now start at \$8.05 an hour, up from \$7.75.
- The Idaho Humanities Council recently awarded a \$1,500 grant to Priest Lake State Park for a log flume interpretation project to help preserve the history of logging in the area and the stories of local loggers.
- GVD Commercial Properties, which owns the former K-Mart building in Ponderay, plans to renovate the 85,000-square-foot building and rename it Ponderay Crossing. Since K-Mart closed in 1992, the building has had only a few occupants. Currently, a Liquidation World store is using about one-third of the building. After the renovation, GVD expects that three large tenants will face Highway 95 with up to five smaller tenants facing the Kootenai Cutoff. Construction recently began on a 6,000-square-foot addition at the south end of the building. When the addition is completed in July, it will be divided into two to five units. The Wireless Works, a store currently located in Ponderay, plans to move into a 1,200-square-foot storefront in the addition this summer.
- Joe Katz, a Sandpoint resident who grew up in Philadelphia and retired from the U.S. Forest Service, recently started a new career when he and his wife opened Joe's Philly Steaks and Hoagies in Sandpoint.

KOOTENAI COUNTY

- The Idaho Legislature, at the request of Rep. Frank Henderson of Post Falls, appropriated \$85,000 to North Idaho College for its Workforce Training Center to teach businesses how to set-up and manage structured on-the-job training programs for their employees. Structured programs train the trainers and provide means of verifying that employees learn what they are supposed to learn.
- Wild Waters, the 25-year-old water-slide park in Coeur d'Alene, recently began the first phase of work on a \$4 million expansion. The first phase involves building a 1,200-foot-long lazy river with a 600-gallon bucket that dumps water on floaters, a swinging rope from which swimmers will drop into a deep pool in the river and a bar that serves frozen drinks to swimmers. The \$1.5 million feature is expected to open June 22. The second phase, installing four new family tube rides, will start in early 2008 and be ready for the 2008 season. Wild Water, located immediately southeast of where Interstate 90 passes under Highway 95, employs 100 people during its season, which runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day.
- Money Magazine recently ranked Coeur d'Alene as the best place in the country for young retirees. Coeur d'Alene stood out for the many leisure activities it offers, as well as the good dining, shopping and health care opportunities. The magazine was impressed by the area's "flourishing golf culture, which feature the world's only moveable floating green."
- The Idaho Commerce & Labor office in Coeur d'Alene, North Idaho College and the chambers of commerce in Coeur d'Alene, Hayden, Post Falls and Rathdrum sponsored the second annual Kootenai County Job Fair on April 18 at the Kootenai County Fairgrounds in Coeur d'Alene. About 100 employers met with nearly 4,000 job seekers during the event.
- Neider Retail Center across from Costco in Coeur d'Alene is filling up. The first tenants were Ala Carte Floral, Some Like It Hot tanning salon and H&R Block tax service. Kootenai Lawn and Garden, a lawnmower and chainsaw sales and service com-

pany, and a Sprint store that sells cell phones and accessories along with basic services recently moved in. Cena Coeur d'Alene plans to open there in early May. Cena's customers use its kitchen facilities to prepare gourmet meals for freezing and later cooking. Three to 12 entrees with side dishes can be prepared per session.

- The Post Falls Chamber of Commerce and the Post Falls School District sponsored a Reserve Job Fair on March 3 at Kimball Corp., the furniture manufacturing plant in Post Falls. High school seniors met with professionals from 100 different occupations, learning about those occupations and the skills they require. The reverse job fair placed the high school students at booths, promoting themselves to the members of the business community who browsed and asked questions. Each student was interviewed four times. The students were scored on the quality of their booths, portfolios, interview skills and presence.
- John Bowman, who owns a bicycle store in Hayden, recently opened Mountain View Cyclery and Fitness in the Milltown Center in Post Falls. The store sells bicycles, clothing and accessories and includes a repair service. It is located just off Interstate 90 on the Centennial Trail.
- The Silver Lake Mall in Coeur d'Alene welcomed two new tenants in April. Magic Marble is a gift shop featuring intricately carved marble as well as fabrics, costume jewelry and home décor. Many of its products are imported from India. Graffiti Skate Shop recently opened across from Bath and Body Works. It sells skateboards, wakeboards, snowboards and related clothing and accessories.
- American Reflections, a new shop in the Sunset Village minimall on Highway 95 in Coeur d'Alene, allows local quilters to finish their creations without traveling to Spokane or Sandpoint. At the shop, quilters use machines to join the top and bottom pieces of a quilt with patterns. Customers may rent a 12-foot or 14-foot machine for \$20 per hour after taking a \$50 instructional course. The new store is just around the corner from a complementary business, Bear Paw Quilting, which sells materials for quilts.
- Mongolian Barbecue recently opened in Coeur d'Alene. The restaurant, where stir-fry meals designed by customers are cooked right in front of customers, can seat up to 78 people inside and 28 on the patio.

- Quinn Essentials, a 6,000-square-foot store that opened in March in Post Falls, sells new furniture, lighting, carpet and other home accessories.
- Red Lion Hotels Corp. is adding 48 boat slips to the 32 boat slips currently in the Spokane River marina at Red Lion Templin's Hotel in Post Falls. The \$500,000 construction project, scheduled for completion June 1, includes eight jet-ski ramps, a 10,000-square-foot perimeter dock and a 2,000-square-foot boardwalk.

SHOSHONE COUNTY

- Lookout Pass Ski Area on the Idaho-Montana border ended its best ski season ever on April 8. By mid-February, Lookout Pass already had broken its previous record for visitors. Lookout Pass employed about 80 people this ski season, double its employment five years ago.
- Construction began in April on the Pinehurst-Kingston Public Library expansion. The library is part of the Kootenai-Shoshone Area Libraries District, which formed in the 1990s and includes libraries in Athol, Harrison, Hayden, Rathdrum and Spirit Lake. A \$3.4 million bond was passed in August 2005 to upgrade the library. The Pinehurst-Kingston Public Library was built in 1983. Only one small cosmetic remodel has occurred since. This project expands the library 1,000 square feet to over 3,000, providing a larger children's area, more space for shelving, additional computers and a large meeting room. That room will be accessible to groups after the library closes. The library also will receive new furniture, computers and other fixtures. The project is slated for completion by the beginning of September.

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North Central Idaho News

CLEARWATER, IDAHO, LATAH, LEWIS & NEZ PERCE COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

SPECIAL TOPIC: HOUSING COSTS RISING

Incomes are not keeping pace with rising housing costs, according to a recent forum sponsored by the Palouse Economic Development Council and the Community Action Center, and that is creating "the gap." "In Whitman and Latah counties, home values are increasing by about 45 percent while incomes have upped by a little more than 10 percent," said Chris Venne, development finance director for Community Frameworks, a Spokane-based organization that provides affordable housing alternatives in the Pacific Northwest. The problem affects economic development, Venne said. For example moderate-income workers such as firefighters and other emergency responders are moving into less expensive, more suburban areas that are farther away from their service area, increasing response times. Teachers cannot afford to purchase homes and often turn down jobs because of the lack of available affordable housing. Businesses are finding it difficult to recruit workers because employees can't afford to buy homes.

Forum attendees discussed cost-saving housing alternatives such as small clusters of homes built on one large lot. The homes can be quality built, but reduced land costs bring the total cost down. As those homes become more popular, though, values will most likely increase. Self-help housing options such as Habitat for Humanity and similar programs build homes for people with low to moderate incomes if the new owners help in their construction. Land trust options also allow moderate-income families to purchase homes, without owning the land. Modular and manufactured homes also are options. Venne urges potential home owners and

North Central Idaho Table 1: Lewiston MSA Labor Force & Employment
Nez Perce County, Idaho and Asotin County, Washington

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	29,960	29,070	28,750	3.1	4.2
Unemployment	1,040	1,060	1,170	-1.9	-11.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5	3.6	4.1		
Total Employment	28,920	28,010	27,580	3.2	4.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	30,220	29,420	29,070	2.7	4.0
Unemployment	1,310	1,430	1,430	-8.4	-8.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.3	4.9	4.9		
Total Employment	28,910	27,990	27,640	3.3	4.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	27,580	27,300	27,080	1.0	1.8
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	4,690	4,600	4,560	2.0	2.9
Natural Resources & Mining	190	190	200	0.0	-5.0
Construction	1,480	1,320	1,300	12.1	13.8
Manufacturing	3,020	3,090	3,060	-2.3	-1.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	540	540	520	0.0	3.8
Paper Manufacturing	1,090	1,090	1,150	0.0	-5.2
Other Manufacturing	1,390	1,460	1,390	-4.8	0.0
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	22,890	22,700	22,520	0.8	1.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	5,340	5,300	5,310	0.8	0.6
Wholesale Trade	700	690	650	1.4	7.7
Retail Trade	3,460	3,430	3,480	0.9	-0.6
Utilities	90	90	90	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,090	1,090	1,090	0.0	0.0
Information	430	420	420	2.4	2.4
Financial Activities	2,040	2,040	1,960	0.0	4.1
Professional & Business Services	1,540	1,520	1,580	1.3	-2.5
Education & Health Services	4,540	4,510	4,420	0.7	2.7
Leisure & Hospitality	2,530	2,490	2,470	1.6	2.4
Other Services	1,170	1,150	1,110	1.7	5.4
Government Education	2,630	2,630	2,560	0.0	2.7
Government Administration	2,030	2,010	2,020	1.0	0.5
Government Tribes	640	630	670	1.6	-4.5

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

developers to be creative and local political leaders to take an interest in working on more solutions.

SPECIAL TOPIC: POTLATCH LAND USE FEE ENACTED

Potlatch Corp. land has been open and free for people to use for more than 100 years. The land is still open, but the free part has changed. As of April everyone 16 and older must pay to access Potlatch's 660,000 acres in northern Idaho. Matt Van Vleet, spokesman

for the company, said sales have been brisk so far, with more than 600 people purchasing permits, most likely local residents who want to hunt in their favorite spots during spring turkey and bear seasons. Permit costs range from \$10 for a walk-on permit to \$25 per ATV, \$50 for a truck and \$100 for a recreational vehicle. Van Vleet said Potlatch tried to formulate a fee system that would fit the lifestyles of people in the Northwest. Every year, tens of thousands of people recreate on Potlatch land. "It's important that people buy the permits and that this process is successful," Van Vleet said. "Otherwise, the situation could change." He said if the fee system doesn't work out, one of the company's alternatives is to break the land into large sections and lease them to hunting groups. That is how Potlatch derives additional profit from its land holdings in Arkansas and the Midwest. Van Vleet called user fees "something unique to our land in Idaho. On our other property in Arkansas, people lease whole sections for hunting, and they're the only ones that can use it."

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

CLEARWATER COUNTY

- There will soon be a new builder's supply near Kamiah. Clearwater Builders Supply will soon join Orofino Builders Supply and Grangeville Builders Supply. Clearwater is constructing a new building on a site just past Kamiah en route to Kooskia that will boast a 20,000-square-foot all-covered sales area.

LATAH COUNTY

- John Anderson of the Anderson Group has saved Moscow's grain elevators at Sixth and Jackson streets from the wrecking ball. The company wants to retain the 70-foot diameter steel and 40-foot diameter concrete elevators for their historic value while using them in a way that benefits the community. "We want to rethink the boundaries between academia, industry and the community," Anderson said. According to Anderson, there is no final vision yet, but his company is looking at a variety of possibilities. "We want to retain and restore a historic icon that contributes to Moscow's unique sense of place and hope it serves as a catalyst for community-minded development along the railroad and industrial corridor." Anderson suggested the site could be used for farmers' markets, recreational and community events. "Initially, the grain elevators will exist as decoration, but in the long run we'll be using it for development," Anderson said. He has even received some suggestions for a restaurant or conference center at the top of the structure with a 360-degree view of the Palouse.

- People from throughout the Palouse want to create the Knowledge Corridor brand, a concept to attract business to the area. The Blue Ribbon Committee, which includes members from the University of Idaho, Washington State University, the city of Moscow, the Latah Economic Development Council and the city of Pullman, have met with Advantage Advertising representatives in Lewiston to begin work on the branding image. "We have to develop what exactly that means," said Margaret Howlett of the Latah Economic Development Council. The Knowledge Corridor concept is designed to attract businesses that can help the area grow. The concept has worked in other areas, and proponents believe the exceptional quality of life in the Palouse will attract participants. Howlett acknowledged the trust and cooperation between the two universities that has helped bring business and research to the area. "I want to continue to see that grow," she added. "Clustering attracts others who use services of another business. Pretty soon we'll have a group that works really well together."
- The Port of Whitman County is close to signing a lease with an international company that plans to establish a biodiesel crushing facility at the Port of Wilma near Clarkston, Wash. The plant would be capable of producing 30 million gallons of biodiesel per year. Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based Losonoco Inc. announced its plans to build the facility at the Port of Wilma on the Snake River late last month. Losonoco Chief Operating Officer Don Markley said, "It is the ideal region with existing wheat production and, hopefully, soon canola." Losonoco contacted the port three months ago about its Wilma property. According to a Losonoco press release, it will work with local growers to supply some of its feedstock but will primarily contract with an international grain broker and buy most of its 360,000 tons of seed from Canada. Losonoco will lease 10 acres initially with the first option to lease an additional 10 acres. The company will pay \$23,000 a year for its site plus 12.48 percent in lieu of property tax.
- Lydig Construction Inc. of Spokane will begin work as soon as July on a \$50 million biotechnology and life sciences building on the north side of the Washington State University campus in Pullman. Lydig has issued a notice for interested subcontractors to pre-qualify to bid on concrete, masonry and stonework; structural steel; roofing and sheet metal; glazing systems; metal stud framing and drywall; laboratory casework and equipment; and mechanical and electrical work. The first phase of the four-story,

130,000-square-foot building, removal of the old tennis courts and site work, was done last summer for \$2.5 million. Since then, work has awaited funding approval. The biotechnology and life sciences building will house the university's School of Molecular Biosciences, the Center for Integrated Biotechnology and the Center for Reproductive Biology. The building is scheduled to be completed in 2008 and is the second of six envisioned in a master plan for a research and education complex on the campus. The first building constructed was for plant bioscience and was completed in 2005. Future buildings in the complex would house programs in agriculture, veterinary medicine and other research disciplines.

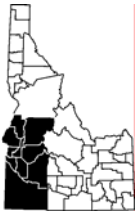
NEZ PERCE AND ASOTIN, WASH., COUNTIES

- Hillcrest Aircraft Co. of Lewiston is building two new hangars at the Lewiston/Nez Perce County Regional Airport to house eight-passenger airplanes with wing spans up to 55 feet. Three of the four spaces in the 10,500-square-foot steel buildings have already been reserved, said Gale Wilson, owner of Hillcrest. The construction project marks Hillcrest's entry into leasing storage for bigger planes. Currently the business has about 16,500 square feet of space divided into 13 bays that accommodate four-passenger planes with wing spans of less than 40 feet. The demand for larger hangars is growing in the Lewiston-Clarkston area. Two similar hangars are under construction at the airport by other developers. This is the first step in developing seven acres that Hillcrest Aircraft leases from the airport. Crews are installing taxiways, septic tanks and systems for storm water, electricity, water and telephone. Wilson said the company expects to build 10 more hangars during the next decade. Providing storage and fuel for planes is a sideline to Hillcrest's main business of sending pilots and helicopters throughout the nation doing work for the federal government such as fighting fires.
- The Nez Perce Tribe will give the Lapwai School District \$500,000 over the next five years to help complete the new high school and middle school. The donation comes after a bond levy failed in February, leaving the district unable to finish the current construction. "Although the high school and middle school is not a tribal school, but an Idaho public school, the Nez Perce Tribe has always placed an emphasis on education and feels this contribution is a worthwhile investment," said Rebecca Miles, chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Ex-

ecutive Committee. The school district passed a \$3.9 million bond in 2004 to build a new school. But building costs soared shortly after that initial bond passed, leaving the district unable to afford completing the building. The Lapwai School District does not run a maintenance and operation levy like most other schools in the region. The district receives about \$1.3 million a year in impact aid, money given to districts impacted by a large area of trust land. The district also receives about \$40,000 a year from the Nez Perce Tribe's gaming revenue.

- Potlatch Corp. is taking a loss to get out of the business of raising poplar trees near Boardman, Ore. The company has announced the sale of its 17,000-acre hybrid poplar farm to an undisclosed private-equity-tree-farm investment fund for \$65 million. Potlatch anticipates taking a tax book loss of \$33.5 million on the sale, according to a Potlatch news release. The company's strategy for the poplar farm has evolved with fluctuations in markets for wood products. The development of the poplar farm began in 1992 when federal policies were limiting the amount of trees available for logging in national forests. "The Boardman project was somewhat of a hedge against chip supply shortages at the beginning," said company officials. That led to concerns that prices for chips would rise, but chip prices fell and never reached levels some had predicted, partially caused by a substantial reduction of pulp capacity on the West Coast in the 1990s. Very few chips from the Boardman farm ever made it into Potlatch's production. The market conditions for chips prompted Potlatch to shift its strategy at Boardman to one that included saw logs. Lumber from poplar trees can be used for finishing work such as molding, cabinets and paneling, but it's not strong enough for floors, walls or roofs. Potlatch at one time considered building its own sawmill for poplar near Boardman, then put aside the idea in favor of finding an organization with more experience in poplar to do so.

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Southwestern Idaho News

ADA, ADAMS, BOISE, CANYON, ELMORE, GEM, OWYHEE, PAYETTE, VALLEY & WASHINGTON COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Boise-Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate edged up a tenth of a percentage point in March to 2.6 percent as more job seekers flooded the market than it could immediately absorb. Despite this slight increase, March's unemployment rate was sixth-tenths of a percentage point lower than in March 2006. The number of jobless workers was also 16.1 percent — 1,500 — below one year earlier. Even with this slight upward movement in the rate, the metropolitan area is still a job seeker's market. When the unemployment rate drops this low, below what most economists consider full employment, trained workers becomes scarce, theoretically pushing wages higher and bringing better opportunities for people with skills. The additional 300 people looking for work in March should be a boon to area employers.

Nonfarm jobs increased during March by 1.3 percent, raising total jobs 3,500 to 274,200. This expanding job base is offering some multiple job holders opportunities to work just one job that pays better

	Civilian Labor Force	Number Unem- ployed	Percent Unem- ployed	Number Employed
Ada	199,120	4,769	2.4	194,351
Adams	2,080	110	5.3	1,970
Boise	3,550	118	3.3	3,432
Canyon	83,412	2,586	3.1	80,825
Elmore	11,114	382	3.4	10,732
Gem	7,858	253	3.2	7,605
Owyhee	5,186	101	1.9	5,085
Payette	10,620	382	3.6	10,238
Valley	4,992	180	3.6	4,813
Washington	5,308	202	3.8	5,107
Statewide	752,439	21,411	2.8	731,028

Southwestern Idaho Table 1: Boise City-Nampa MSA Labor Force & Employment (Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties)

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	299,100	297,800	289,400	0.4	3.4
Unemployment	7,800	7,500	9,300	4.0	-16.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.6	2.5	3.2		
Total Employment	291,300	290,300	280,100	0.3	4.0
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	300,400	299,100	291,400	0.4	3.1
Unemployment	9,100	9,300	10,200	-2.2	-10.8
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.1	3.5		
Total Employment	291,300	289,800	281,200	0.5	3.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	277,700	274,200	264,300	1.3	5.1
GOODS-PRODUCING INDUSTRIES	56,800	55,900	53,500	1.6	6.2
Natural Resources & Construction	24,800	23,900	23,000	3.8	7.8
Construction	24,500	23,600	22,700	3.8	7.9
Manufacturing	32,000	32,000	30,500	0.0	4.9
Durable Goods	26,000	26,000	24,200	0.0	7.4
Wood Product Manufacturing	2,600	2,600	2,700	0.0	-3.7
Fabricated Metal Products Mfg.	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	1,300	1,300	1,200	0.0	8.3
Computer & Electronic Manufacturing	15,300	15,400	14,100	-0.6	8.5
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,400	2,300	2,100	4.3	14.3
Other Durable Goods	2,900	2,900	2,600	0.0	11.5
Nondurable Goods	6,000	6,000	6,300	0.0	-4.8
Food Manufacturing	4,200	4,300	4,300	-2.3	-2.3
Printing & Related Support Activities	700	700	700	0.0	0.0
Other Nondurable Goods	1,100	1,000	1,300	10.0	-15.4
SERVICE-PROVIDING INDUSTRIES	220,900	218,300	210,800	1.2	4.8
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	53,100	52,500	50,400	1.1	5.4
Trade	45,600	45,000	43,200	1.3	5.6
Wholesale Trade	12,100	12,000	12,200	0.8	-0.8
Wholesalers, Durable Goods	6,900	6,800	7,300	1.5	-5.5
Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	3,600	3,600	3,600	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	33,500	33,000	31,000	1.5	8.1
Food & Beverage Stores	4,300	4,300	4,400	0.0	-2.3
General Merchandise Stores	7,300	7,100	6,200	2.8	17.7
All Other Retail Trade	21,900	21,600	20,400	1.4	7.4
Transportation, Warehousing, & Utilities	7,500	7,500	7,200	0.0	4.2
Utilities	400	700	600	-42.9	-33.3
Transportation & Warehousing	7,100	6,800	6,600	4.4	7.6
Information	4,700	4,700	5,500	0.0	-14.5
Telecommunications	1,500	1,500	2,400	0.0	-37.5
Financial Activities	15,100	15,000	15,000	0.7	0.7
Finance & Insurance	10,700	10,700	10,900	0.0	-1.8
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	4,400	4,300	4,100	2.3	7.3
Professional & Business Services	40,400	39,600	38,200	2.0	5.8
Professional, Scientific, & Technical	11,800	11,900	11,600	-0.8	1.7
Management of Companies & Ent.	5,600	5,600	5,700	0.0	-1.8
Administrative & Support & Waste Mgmt.	23,000	22,100	20,900	4.1	10.0
Educational & Health Services	32,500	32,200	31,800	0.9	2.2
Educational Services	2,600	2,600	2,800	0.0	-7.1
Health Care & Social Assistance	29,900	29,600	29,000	1.0	3.1
Hospitals	9,700	9,700	9,400	0.0	3.2
Leisure & Hospitality	24,200	23,600	22,900	2.5	5.7
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	3,100	2,900	2,900	6.9	6.9
Accommodation & Food Services	21,100	20,700	20,000	1.9	5.5
Accommodation	2,400	2,400	2,200	0.0	9.1
Food Services & Drinking Places	18,700	18,300	17,800	2.2	5.1
Other Services	7,700	7,700	6,500	0.0	18.5
Total Government	43,200	43,000	40,500	0.5	6.7
Federal Government	5,600	5,500	5,500	1.8	1.8
State & Local Government	37,600	37,500	35,000	0.3	7.4
State Government	14,000	13,900	13,600	0.7	2.9
State Government Education	4,700	4,600	4,900	2.2	-4.1
State Government Administration	9,300	9,300	8,700	0.0	6.9
Local Government	23,600	23,600	21,400	0.0	10.3
Local Government Education	15,300	15,300	13,400	0.0	14.2
Local Government Administration	8,300	8,300	8,000	0.0	3.8

* Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

and part-time workers the chance at full-time employment.

In March, construction began seasonal hiring, adding 900 new jobs from February and up 1,800 from one year ago due to a robust commercial building sector. New retail outlets, restaurants and bank buildings are going up all over the valley. Residential construction is also picking up steam. Local home sales rose during March following the slower winter months. The monthly gain in construction jobs accounts for over 25 percent of March's total nonfarm job growth.

Other sectors posting strong job gains in March were retail trade, helped by the opening of several chain retailers, and administrative support as employment services began to get busier. Leisure and hospitality saw solid growth with area golf courses and restaurants gearing up for the busy summer season. The March 2007 civilian labor force and total employment figures for all 10 counties in southwestern Idaho are shown in Table 2 on page 19.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

BOISE MSA

- Meridian-based Idaho Truss, which makes prefabricated walls, staircases and roof trusses, has opened a new manufacturing plant in Boise that employs 60. The new plant increases the company's manufacturing capacity by four times while adding some new equipment. Once fully operational, the new plant will employ 100.
- Caldwell-based Casa Valdez just passed a milestone, celebrating 30 years in business. Casa Valdez makes tortillas in a 22,500-square-foot factory and employs 66 people. Their tortillas are shipped daily to outlets in Idaho, Oregon, Wyoming, Nevada and major grocery store chains.
- Canyon County's Treasure Valley Marketplace recently welcomed several new retail stores including Best Buy employing 100 people; DressBarn, a women's clothing store; Maurices, a clothing store for men and women that is also the parent company to DressBarn; Lane Bryant, another women's clothing retailer, and Michael's craft store.
- Kohl's recently opened its first two stores in the area, one in the Treasure Valley Marketplace and the other in Meridian. The two 89,000-square-foot stores employ approximately 200 people each.
- The influx of the new retail outlets has not only brought jobs to the county, but residents are saving travel time and gas expenses by shopping closer to home, and they are keeping their dollars in the county economy. The property taxes the county collects from the new commercial buildings further diversify its property tax base, which has been leaning heavily towards residences. Commercial and industrial properties are typically more profitable in that they need fewer services than the typical residential area. Thus, the more commercial and industrial properties a county has, the easier it is for the county to avoid huge increases in residential property taxes.
- Another large retail development, the 100-acre Nampa Gateway Center, is currently under construction at Interstate 84 and the Garritty Boulevard exit. A JCPenney store will anchor the mall, which will include 30 to 35 other tenants.
- Southwestern Idaho's first road project funded by GARVEE bonds recently got under way as construction crews began to widen the westbound off-ramp at Eagle Road. The new off-ramp will be two lanes splitting into four lanes, which will become two northbound lanes and two southbound lanes. In addition to expanding the width of the off ramp, crews will lengthen the ramp by 1,600 feet which should help with the traffic backed-up onto the interstate that is so common at Eagle Road. The cost of this project is \$2.5 million. More information is available at the Idaho Transportation Department Web site at <http://itd.idaho.gov/projects/>.
- Movie rental company Netflix, which opened a distribution center in Boise last June, employs about a dozen people and handles an average of 8,500 DVDs each day.
- Joe's Sporting Goods, formerly known as G.I. Joe's, is planning to open a second store in Nampa next spring or summer. The company opened its first 52,000-square-foot store in Meridian this spring.
- The Meridian School District has recently moved its administrative offices and personnel to the former Jabil Circuit manufacturing plant. The Jabil building has been vacant for over four years, and the school district bought it in 2006. This fall the district will move some of its professional-technical programs into the building including architecture, construction, pre-engineering and computer networking. Other plans for the building include converting the cafeteria into a culinary arts program and establishing a rigorous college prep program.
- MPC Computers has been awarded part of a large federal contract for hardware and software products. MPC was named as a prime contractor among other contractors. Officials of the 550-employee company in Nampa said the contract is worth a total of \$5.6 billion over seven years.
- Winco Foods has begun construction on its latest area store in Eagle. Located next to Home Depot on

State Street and Highway 55, Winco's fifth store will also be the largest at 92,000 square feet. The new Winco should open in early 2008.

- Eagle-based TenXsys has landed a \$750,000 contract from the Department of Defense to research using sensors it makes to enable military amputees to better use prosthetic limbs so they can get back to active duty sooner. TenXsys will work with Boise State researchers to test sensor prototypes on volunteers later in 2007 to determine movement patterns and energy use, potentially decreasing rehabilitation time.

ELMORE COUNTY

- Atlanta Gold, the company that wants to start mining gold about 1½ miles south of the city of Atlanta, has recently moved its headquarters to Mountain Home from Boise. Atlanta Gold has been caught up in some turmoil regarding its proposed mining operation because it will use cyanide leaching methods to extract the ore from the rock. Atlanta Gold has changed the route for trucking in supplies to a more indirect route that is farther away from the Boise River to avoid any potential damage from a spill. Atlanta Gold owns and is in negotiations to acquire more property that would allow it to mine about 2 million ounces of gold over the next 12 years. At current prices that much gold would be worth over \$1 billion.
- Marathon Cheese recently held a ribbon cutting of the new plant in Mountain Home. The company is currently running three production lines and employs 74 people. At full capacity, it will be operating 16 production lines and employ approximately 500.

PAYETTE COUNTY

- Teton Machine Co. of Payette recently added another piece of equipment valued at almost \$750,000. The new machine operates unattended overnight and over weekends. It produces parts to extremely small tolerances. Teton officials attribute the ability to buy new equipment to the aerospace and medical contracts the company has acquired in recent years.
- Mike Hannigan of Hannigan Chevrolet in Payette and Hannigan Motors of Ontario, Ore., said he has acquired enough land near the Interstate 84 exchange to combine the dealerships. The Payette County Commission has applied for a \$500,000 community development block grant to help fund public facility improvements in the area. Hannigan estimates the new dealership will bring in 34 new jobs for Payette County once this project is completed in fall 2008.
- Homegrown Poultry LLC of New Plymouth purchased the state's first-ever license for operating a chicken and rabbit processing plant in February. Homegrown Poultry is a custom processor for local farmers and

other individuals who raise chickens. The plant's owners expect to process over 18,000 chickens this year.

VALLEY COUNTY

- Fairmont Tamarack, which is being developed by Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf, held its first land sale of 125 condos and hotel condominiums in March, raising approximately \$140 million. The properties sold out in seven hours in this third phase of Tamarack Resort. Prices for the condos ranged from \$600,000 to \$3.8 million. This sale brought in more international buyers, mostly from Mexico. Idaho residents ranked third among U.S. buyers behind Florida and California. Since Tamarack began selling property in January 2004, it has raised \$499 million.

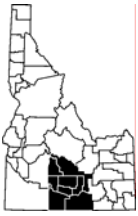
ADAMS COUNTY

- The city of Council has decided to implement a strategic plan developed regionally by the Valley Adams Planning Partnership to address growth management including affordable housing and economic development. In addition, the city wants to focus on business and work force retention and work force development.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

- Weiser Airport will use a \$393,000 Federal Aviation Administration grant to install instrument landing equipment. The state of Idaho and the city of Weiser will split the rest of the costs, about 5 percent. According to airport officials, over 50 percent of flights at the Weiser Airport are commercial.
- Weiser Butterfly Kisses recently had a grand opening. The store carries locally made products and gift items.
- Mirage Trailers of Nampa has expanded to Weiser. Mirage purchased the old HayPro plant south of town where it will manufacture two product lines. The Balboa, which is a toy-hauler trailer complete with kitchen, bathroom and beds, and an entry level cargo trailer called TNT. Mirage has 83 workers at the Weiser facility with plans to expand to 150.

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South Central Idaho News

BLAINE, CAMAS, CASSIA, GOODING, JEROME, LINCOLN, MINIDOKA & TWIN FALLS COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

Adverse weather that stunted late winter construction and landscaping combined with falling early spring retail sales activity to send the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate up a notch for the Twin Falls-Jerome area in March. The labor force and total employment slipped by nearly 1,300 from February at a time when employers typically are gearing up for the busy summer season. Home improvement stores did begin hiring for their garden centers, and that helped keep the unemployment rate from edging higher than 2.7 percent.

The regional economy continues to diversify. While the smaller communities are not growing the way the larger cities are, they are contributing to the region's overall economic stability with clusters of specific industries that feed on one another. Dairy is an obvious example, attracting new cheese factories, anaerobic digesters that reduce odor and waste while producing natural gas, feed stock producers and ethanol plants that eventually provide wet distillers grain for the cows along with expansion of the rail and trucking companies that move the products. Table 2 on page 23 compares the region's top five sectors in total wages, jobs and average wages in the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2002. It demonstrates clearly how specific industries such as retail provide more jobs but at less pay than other industries. Total wages for retail have grown over 23 percent in those four years while the job growth was less than a third that at under 7 percent. However, this inverse relationship is likely the result of tight labor markets throughout the south central region and many other parts of the state and nation. Retailers are making do with their current staff, providing them with more hours. The decline in jobs and payroll in local government and the jump in health care payrolls reflects the shift of hundreds of jobs from the government sector to the

South Central Idaho Table 1: Twin Falls-Jerome MicSA Labor Force & Employment—Twin Falls and Jerome counties

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	47,790	49,050	48,360	-2.6	-1.2
Unemployment	1,310	1,300	1,700	0.8	-22.9
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.7	2.6	3.5		
Total Employment	46,480	47,750	46,660	-2.7	-0.4
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	47,220	48,300	47,910	-2.2	-1.4
Unemployment	1,560	1,660	1,890	-6.0	-17.5
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.3	3.4	4.0		
Total Employment	45,660	46,640	46,020	-2.1	-0.8
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs**	38,620	38,360	37,470	0.7	3.1
<i>Goods-Providing Industries</i>	7,270	7,050	6,520	3.1	11.5
Natural Resources & Mining	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Construction	2,240	2,110	2,150	6.2	4.2
Manufacturing	5,000	4,910	4,340	1.8	15.2
Food Manufacturing	2,660	2,640	2,450	0.8	8.6
Other Manufacturing	2,340	2,270	1,890	3.1	23.8
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	31,350	31,310	30,950	0.1	1.3
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	9,340	9,590	9,510	-2.6	-1.8
Wholesale Trade	1,850	1,830	1,850	1.1	0.0
Retail Trade	5,170	5,440	5,630	-5.0	-8.2
Utilities	110	140	160	-21.4	-31.3
Transportation & Warehousing	2,210	2,180	1,870	1.4	18.2
Information	630	620	610	1.6	3.3
Financial Activities	1,550	1,590	1,700	-2.5	-8.8
Professional & Business Services	4,350	4,290	4,330	1.4	0.5
Educational & Health Services	4,980	4,960	3,300	0.4	50.9
Leisure & Hospitality	3,120	3,040	2,960	2.6	5.4
Other Services	1,460	1,440	1,360	1.4	7.4
Government Education	3,480	3,330	3,330	4.5	4.5
Government Administration	2,440	2,450	3,850	-0.4	-36.6

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

health care sector at the Magic Valley Regional Medical Center when it was bought by St. Luke's in mid-2006. Agriculture is a sector that is likely under-reported due to the nature of the tax laws that do not require employers to pay into unemployment insurance if specific criteria is met, but it does rank high in number of jobs particularly during the July, August and September quarter, which is a peak employment period for this industry. Manufacturing ranks in each category because of the new com-

South Central Table 2: Top Five Industries by Total Wages, Jobs and Average Hourly Wages, Compared, 2002 and 2006			
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	2006	2002	% change '02-'06
TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES BY TOTAL WAGES			
Manufacturing	73,322,996	60,877,659	20.44%
Local Government	60,716,935	64,086,228	-5.26%**
Retail Trade	59,403,071	48,066,805	23.58%
Professional & Business Services	56,232,392	42,443,904	32.49%
Educational & Health Services	54,631,095	31,056,824	75.91%**
TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES BY TOTAL JOBS			
Retail Trade	10,076	9,432	6.83%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	9,261	8,177	13.26%
Local Government	8,823	9,678	-8.84%**
Manufacturing	8,380	8,664	-3.28%
Professional & Business Services	8,114	8,124	-0.12%
TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES BY AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE			
Federal Government	\$25.49	\$19.59	30.07%
Utilities	\$19.30	\$15.89	21.46%
Wholesale Trade	\$17.44	\$13.74	26.93%
Manufacturing	\$16.86	\$13.54	24.53%
Financial Activities	\$16.70	\$13.83	20.76%

panies that have relocated to the region, and automation has eliminated some unskilled jobs while focusing on hiring more skilled workers at higher wages. Many manufacturers tied to the agricultural base are firmly entrenched in south central Idaho. They are either investing in the physical plant, machinery and equipment or in additional manpower depending on their individual circumstances. The number of manufacturing jobs declined since 2002 because several large plants closed in Burley and Jerome, and while new businesses have relocated their work forces have not grown enough to offset those original losses. Professional and business services, education and health services and financial services are largely driven by population. With the region's population growing faster than the nation, these sectors will continue to expand. The relatively minor drop in jobs in professional and business services is attributable to a call center closure and the loss of momentum for temporary staffing agencies as the available labor pool keeps getting smaller. Workers who once settled for temporary jobs are now finding permanent employment as businesses scramble for a dwindling number of qualified workers.

TWIN FALLS COUNTY

- Wal-Mart has gotten approval to begin building its supercenter in Twin Falls. The big box retailer hosted

several informational meetings in April, showcasing the layout of the store and its potential benefits to the community. The development includes two pads the company will sell off in the future. A privately-owned pad and piece of ground zoned for commercial development such as offices is adjacent. The average supercenter is 185,000 square feet, but the one in Twin Falls will be 203,000 square feet with a drive-thru pharmacy and garden center, and a tire and lube center. The average supercenter carries approximately 142,000 items. Wal-Mart reports collecting over \$70 million in Idaho sales tax and paying over \$10 million in state and local taxes during the company's most recent fiscal year. Wal-Mart claims that in its 2006 fiscal year it spent over \$260 million for merchandise and services from 322 Idaho suppliers, supporting 17,336 supplier jobs in the state. Wal-Mart will share the \$2.5 million cost of building a road along the south side of the supercenter and the hospital, along with some landscaping and architectural requirements. The retailer has agreed to customize its lighting to limit glare and light pollution.

- Plans for the new St. Luke's Magic Valley Regional Medical Center in Twin Falls continue with hospital management optimistic that a ground-breaking will occur toward the end of May. Initial projections for completion are mid-year 2010.
- Swensen's Market, whose co-owners include Marian Swensen and his nephews Andrew and Ben Swensen, will have a new 20,000-square-foot store to serve the South Park area. The store is scheduled to open May 21 and will replace an existing and much smaller store. The Swensens have been hiring over the past year for management positions and anticipate hiring an additional 15 workers for daily operations. Swensen's has been in business in the Magic Valley for over 50 years. The store was originally opened by Sherman Swensen. There are also stores in Paul and Rupert. The Swensen team has created a market niche that includes home delivery service to residents of Twin Falls, e-mail marketing and specialty produce and groceries for the growing Hispanic population.
- The College of Southern Idaho continues to redefine its space as dirt is moved for the new softball/baseball field across from the main campus on the Breckenridge Endowment Property. Dugouts, press box and lighting will be added in future years. The new building for the nursing program will be the first building constructed off the main campus in this same general area. The administration and board would like to realign part of North College Road to create a more pedestrian-friendly area with North College Road running around the campus expansion.

- The big news in Buhl is the acquisition of the former Coors hops facility by a company that is moving its corporate headquarters from Utah to Buhl — Disco Associates Inc. The company is also involved in engineering consulting, design and construction, and it is planning a biodiesel plant for Buhl that would begin production in 25 months with a payroll of up to 100 producing 40 million gallons of refined oil for use directly in diesel engines. This will be a research plant and may be a prototype for other plants around the region. The company has acquired land, planting 34 acres in canola. Disco has applied an agronomic model that includes all the project's impacts on the community, including agriculture. It estimates an economic impact of \$145 million in addition to sales of over \$180 million once operations are in full swing. In June, Disco will begin building its corporate headquarters in Buhl for 22 employees, some of whom have already moved to Idaho. The infrastructure development prompted by Disco should enhance Buhl as a location for other companies to set up operations in the area that could essentially become an industrial park. Disco intends to sell its biodiesel directly to the city and school district for their motorized fleets at a rate that would realize the savings in transportation and handling. A retail fuel station will also be available to area residents. The Disco headquarters building will protect the dark skies by focused and low energy lighting, and the company will not use genetically modified or engineered rape seed in its process while high-protein byproducts will be sold to local dairies. The company anticipates using 44,000 bushels of canola per day. Initially about 25 percent will be grown locally but eventually 75 percent of the canola should come from local fields. The canola plant is drought resistant and requires few inputs so the amount of energy required to produce this biodiesel product does not surpass its energy potential, making it a more economical choice compared to other renewable fuels.

- The Country Greenhouse has new ownership. The former owner, Galen Jantz, established the business 10 years ago and last fall sold it to the Schmidt family on the understanding that his daughter, a four-year employee at the Country Greenhouse, would train the Schmidts on daily operations. In the past, the business closed in July, but the new owners intend to keep it open longer with an inventory of summer stock and redwood furniture.

MINIDOKA AND CASSIA COUNTIES

- The Burley Army National Guard Armory building will be remodeled this year. The million-dollar project starts in May and should be completed by December. It includes interior and exterior renovations, a

reception room, a new heating and cooling system and a new roof. Security will be enhanced by adding pillars to the exterior of the building so terrorists cannot drive into the armory. The facility will be open for community use after the renovation.

BLAINE COUNTY

- The 71st ski season for Sun Valley Co. did not exceed last year's stellar performance. Sun Valley experienced less than average snowfall and lift pass usage was down despite season pass sales running ahead of 2006. Sun Valley is the grand dame of ski resorts, dating back to 1936 when Union Pacific Railroad Chairman Averill Harriman opened the resort after only seven months of construction. Currently, the resort boasts a total lift capacity of 26,780 skiers an hour, more lift capacity per skier per hour than any other ski area. The mountain assures maximum skiing experience by moving skiers up the hill with high speed exuberance including seven quads, five triples, five doubles and four surface lifts.

Dollar Mtn and Baldy Mtn	2005-2006	2006-2007	% Change
Number of Skiers	420,517	362,317	-13.84
Length of Season	152 days	137 days	-9.87
Natural Snow Cover	300 inches	144 inches	-52%

This year's pass usage was down between 10 percent and 20 percent, depending on the pass program. The resort said the drive market, which includes Twin Falls, Boise and the surrounding area, contributed to the gap.

2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
365,267	384,897	386,908	420,517	362,317

Sun Valley Company intends to implement major changes this summer season including:

- » Replacing two Dollar Mountain chair lifts with detachable quads.
- » Completing the new Symphony Pavilion by mid-2008.
- » Opening the new Gun Club Nine Golf Course in spring 2008.
- » Providing service at Trail Creek Cabin for the first time in 70 years to the hikers, bikers and sightseers who ride up Baldy Mountain on the chair lifts in the summer.

- » Reopening the Gun Club in June at its new location on the north side of Trail Creek Road.
- » Refurbishing of the 33-year-old indoor skating rink this spring. The rink is home to the Sun Valley Suns men's hockey team.
- Paul Kenny's Ski and Sports will move to the downtown Ketchum area under the new name PK's Ski and Sports this summer after over 20 years on Warm Springs. The owners were concerned that they may lose their lease in light of hotel construction planned at Warm Springs village. They also believe downtown offers a great opportunity to capitalize on summer trade.
- The Gold Mine, renowned for the finds that locals and tourists alike delight in unearthing, has been remodeled on the interior after receiving a new roof

last fall. Value-minded shoppers have been coming to the Gold Mine for 51 years, and the recipient of these profits is the community library. The Gold Mine was originally created by enterprising pioneer women, who acknowledged the small tax base could not support a library. The Gold Mine will now have seasonal displays of house wares, apparel and sports equipment in addition to the usual apparel items. It was time to freshen up the store, and the library board acknowledged that "the Gold Mine can change just a little bit but not too much."

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Idaho Labor Market Information Fast Facts

IDAHO'S GROSS STATE PRODUCT

The total value of all the goods and services produced in Idaho grew to nearly \$47.2 billion in 2005, up 8.4 percent over 2004's \$43.5 billion, the ninth highest growth rate in the nation. And Idaho's gains in real gross state product was up 7.4 percent, ranking fourth behind Nevada, Arizona and Florida. Idaho led the nation in growth in retail and wholesale trade, and since 2002 durable manufacturing has grown 72 percent, second only to New Mexico. While durable manufacturing has declined as a percent of the national gross product over that period, it has risen in Idaho from 7.8 percent in 2002 to 10.4 percent in 2005. *Source:* [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

BUSINESS GROWTH

In 2006, 29,883 new businesses filed with the Secretary of State, positioning Idaho as sixth in the nation for creating new businesses and fourth nationally in the growth of venture capital investment. This was a 5 percent increase over 2004.

Source: [Idaho Secretary of State](#)

CONSTRUCTION

After Idaho's construction value hit a record \$4 billion in 2005, up 31.5 percent from 2004, activity slowed through 2006 with the final total at nearly \$3.9 billion, off just 4 percent and the second best year on record. Total permits were off 2.6 percent to just over 42,300. Increased value in commercial construction was not enough to offset a \$415 million drop in residential values. Construction jobs have been driving employment growth across the state for several years. *Sources:* [Wells Fargo Idaho Construction Report -December 2006](#); [Idaho Commerce & Labor](#)

PERSONAL INCOME

Total personal income in Idaho in 2006 was \$43.9 billion, up 7.9 percent from 2005. That was the eighth highest growth rate in the nation and well above the national average. Construction, manufacturing, retail, health care and professional and technical services were the big contributors.

Three of Idaho's five urban areas saw personal income grow faster than the 5 percent rate for cities in general from 2004 to 2005. Coeur d'Alene recorded a 7.5 percent increase, the Boise/Nampa Metropolitan Statistical Area was up 7.2 percent and Idaho Falls rose 6.7 percent. Pocatello matched the national average at 5 percent while the Lewiston area came in at 3.1 percent.

Source: [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

PER-CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME

Idaho's per-capita personal income increased 5.2 percent, or \$1,474, from \$28,478 in 2005 to \$29,952 in 2006. Nationally, per capita personal income increased 5.2 percent, or \$1,801, to \$36,276.

The urban centers — Boise, Coeur d'Alene and Lewiston areas — showed income increases from 2004 to 2005 below the national average for cities of 4 percent while both Pocatello and Idaho Falls had increases slightly higher than the national average.

Source: [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#)

For more fast facts, check out the Idaho Labor Market Information Web site at lmi.idaho.gov



Southeastern Idaho News

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA & POWER COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The March unemployment rate for the Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area crossed the 3 percent line, rising two-tenths to 3.1 percent. The labor force fell by 450 fewer workers from February, reflecting the decision by workers involved in the Kimberly-Clark closure and layoffs at AMI Semiconductor to pursue further education or job training.

Compared to a year earlier, however, the unemployment rate was down seven-tenths of a percent and total employment was up 420.

Nonfarm jobs rose 280 from February and 390 from March 2006. The jobs were fairly evenly distributed between the service and goods-producing sectors. Year-over-year, food manufacturing posted the largest increase in production jobs at 240. Professional and business services, encompassing a wide variety of occupations from physicians to call center workers, had the largest increase in the service sector – 190 – from one year earlier.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

- An Idaho Supreme Court ruling may have helped settle most southeastern Idaho water users concerns about losing their water rights this summer. Since the early 1900's water law has been based on the doctrine of "first in time, first right," thereby giving priority to water users based on the date their water rights were recorded. The new ruling requires water system managers to consider whether senior water rights are being put to good use and whether there is adequate water storage before resolving disputes.
- Southeastern Idaho will receive \$40 million as its share of the Connecting Idaho" road construction and upgrade program for 2007-2008 to widen U.S. Highway 30 from McCammon in Bannock County to Soda

Southeastern Idaho Table 1: Pocatello MSA Labor Force & Employment Bannock and Power counties

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	44,030	44,480	43,910	-1.0	0.3
Unemployment	1,360	1,290	1,660	5.4	-18.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.1	2.9	3.8		
Total Employment	42,670	43,190	42,250	-1.2	1.0
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	44,890	45,470	44,870	-1.3	0.0
Unemployment	1,650	1,680	1,900	-1.8	-13.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.7	3.7	4.2		
Total Employment	43,240	43,790	42,970	-1.3	0.6
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS					
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	5,650	5,560	5,450	1.6	3.7
Natural Resources & Mining	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Construction	1,830	1,740	1,840	5.2	-0.5
Manufacturing	3,790	3,790	3,580	0.0	5.9
Food Manufacturing	1,300	1,290	1,060	0.8	22.6
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	160	160	170	0.0	-5.9
Machinery Manufacturing	290	290	240	0.0	20.8
Other Manufacturing	2,040	2,050	2,110	-0.5	-3.3
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	34,140	33,960	33,950	0.5	0.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	7,420	7,310	7,350	1.5	1.0
Wholesale Trade	1,340	1,320	1,320	1.5	1.5
Retail Trade	4,700	4,650	4,550	1.1	3.3
Utilities	50	50	50	0.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,320	1,290	1,430	2.3	-7.7
Information	700	700	670	0.0	4.5
Financial Activities	2,160	2,160	2,100	0.0	2.9
Professional & Business Services	5,700	5,680	5,510	0.4	3.4
Educational & Health Services	3,410	3,360	3,440	1.5	-0.9
Leisure & Hospitality	3,390	3,360	3,400	0.9	-0.3
Other Services	1,160	1,160	1,160	0.0	0.0
Government Education	6,080	6,100	6,010	-0.3	1.2
Government Administration	4,130	4,130	4,320	0.0	-4.4

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Springs in Caribou County. In addition to making the highway safer for travel, the improvements are expected to increase traffic and tourism throughout the region.

- Nearly every school district in southeastern Idaho is debating the merits of a four-day school week and a plan that would allow high school students to earn college credits at a reduced fee of \$65 per credit. Districts currently operating on a four-day schedule say attendance has improved and claim educational benefits as well as cost savings. But adapting to the schedule has been difficult for some families.

- Southeastern Idaho will have a less-than-average runoff this spring because snow packs in most basins are only 40 percent to 70 percent of normal, according to Idaho's Water Supply Outlook Report from the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service. Concerns about water shortages for this summer will be lessened because carryover storage from last year is greater than average. Employers involved in agriculture, directly or indirectly, will be making decisions based on how they think the water supply will affect their ability to do business this year and next.
- Idaho, particularly the counties in eastern Idaho, will be greatly impacted if the Idaho National Laboratory is chosen to be part of President Bush's Global Nuclear Energy Partnership initiative. Legislators in the region support the initiative and formalized that stand during the recent legislative session.
- Southeastern Idaho, often recognized for healthy life styles and outdoor recreational opportunities, was found to have the lowest cancer rate in the state, according to a recent Idaho Hospital Association report. The region had 352.5 incidences of cancer per 100,000 person years compared to a state average of 456.7 occurrences.
- Portneuf Medical Center recently began operating its Heart and Vascular Center around the clock now that it has hired two additional doctors. Dr. Julio Vasquez, a cardiothoracic and vascular surgeon, and Dr. David Gonzales, an interventional cardiologist, recently joined the staff.

Bannock County

- Harry Christ is opening a high-end furniture store, Shoppe at the Paris, at the former location of The Paris in downtown Pocatello. The store will feature metropolitan furnishings, European art and furniture and rugs from Istanbul. Christ also plans to convert the upstairs into three urban-style lofts.
- Pocatello has a new Mediterranean food restaurant, Pasta Vino Ristorante. The new restaurant under Executive Chef Mike Frey is located in the former Bengal Hut.
- Nearly 100 people turned out for the ground breaking of the Old Town Pavilion, which will be located adjacent to the Old Town Pocatello office.
- Downtown Pocatello is home to Syringa Wireless LLC, a telecommunication company serving southern Idaho. The company is a consortium of five long-standing smaller Idaho telecommunications companies and currently has about 1,000 customers.

- Several large spectator events in February contributed significantly to the local economy. The Simplot Indoor Track & Field Games, the Idaho State Wrestling Championships and the Dodge National Circuit Finals Rodeo directly impacted local retail businesses such as motels, food service operations and gas stations. Clothing and novelty stores saw sales increase because of these events, which drew people from many parts of the country.
- Southeastern Idaho's first gated community is being developed on 10 acres south of Highland Golf Course by Coventry Communities. Cooper Creek will offer of 37 homes ranging from \$187,000 to \$250,000.
- The FBI opened a new transcription center at the Pocatello Information and Technology Center. Approximately 20 Idaho State University students will be hired to transcribe material for the 56 FBI field offices throughout the United States.

BEAR LAKE COUNTY

- On May 15, voters in the Bear Lake County School District will decide what action should be taken by the school board to address decreasing enrollments at schools in Paris, Georgetown and Bear Lake. The middle school student population is projected to decline about 200 students in the next eight years. Options on the advisory ballot require a simple majority.
- Bear Lake County is working with Whisper Mountain Professional Services to address the county's growth plans.
- Montpelier Mayor Reed Peterson is working with others to provide bus transportation for seasonal workers from Montpelier to the Bear Lake area. The bus could also provide transportation for visitors.
- Amy Bishop was recently named director of the Greater Bear Lake Valley Chamber of Commerce. She will divide her time between the chamber and the city of Montpelier. Her office is located in the downtown visitor's center.

BINGHAM COUNTY

- Bingham County and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game are jointly building a fish hatchery and improving public access to the fishing ponds in the Springfield area. Because of its unusual combination of a cold artesian well and a warm water source, the hatchery will be able to raise both trout and warm water fish such as blue gill, bass and catfish.

- The Bingham County Planning and Zoning Commission voted to grant a special use permit for the construction of a hunting lodge in the mountains east of Blackfoot. The lodge will be owned and operated by Rulon Jones, who also owns an elk hunting operation in the same area.
- Iogen, a Canadian-based biotechnology company, has proposed a cellulosic ethanol plant between Shelley and Firth. Iogen was awarded an \$80 million Department of Energy grant for the project. Construction depends on approval of federal loan guarantees to complete the \$320 million plant. The proposed plant would start production in 2011 and employ about 140 people.
- Nearly 100 percent of the students at the Shoshone-Bannock Junior/Senior High Schools and many elementary students are learning how to handle money by opening accounts in a school mini-bank. The accounts can be as small as \$3 and as large as \$500. The students are required to track deposits and withdrawals as well as learn about the interest earned from savings and the interest paid on borrowed money. The mini-banks are part of the Native American Community Development Corp. The corporation is the economic development arm of the Native American Bank, a national bank established by a group of tribal nations and the Alaska Native Corp. The parent company, Native American Bancorporation, bought its first bank in 2001 in Browning, Mont.
- Bingham County signed a 20-year contract with Logite International to provide solid waste disposal for the county when the current contract with Idaho Waste System expires. Logite uses a steam reforming process to convert any material containing carbon into a gas composed primarily of carbon monoxide. The by-products from this process can be used for energy production or as building blocks for fuels such as methanol, ethanol or biodiesel. The contract is effective June 1, 2010, and construction of the processing facility is expected to begin as soon as permits are obtained from the Department of Environmental Quality.
- Fort Hall is the site of a new manufacturing business. All My Relations Inc. manufactures an attachment for fossil fuel engines which increases fuel efficiency and lessens emissions. The device is a hydrogen/oxygen generator and has been labeled "Go to Green 2448" by developer Robert Dude Perry. Currently the business is manufacturing about 25 generators a day in its 900-square-foot building. But with increased demand, the company is planning to build a 12,000-square-foot facility to manu-

facture 400 units per day. The company offers competitive wages and provides day care for children of employees.

- Atomic City is one of three sites being considered for a spent nuclear fuel recycling facility. EnergySolutions uses a spent nuclear fuel reprocessing technique first used in Great Britain to gain more energy from the fuel. The other sites are in New Mexico and South Carolina. The entire process should also reduce the amount of waste to be stored at places like the Yucca Mountain site in Nevada. If Atomic City is chosen, as many as 5,000 jobs would be created in addition to the jobs needed for the construction of the facility. Construction would not begin before 2020.
- After much discussion and several hearings, the Firth City Council approved phase one of the Kirk Jolley Development for 24 homes. The entire preliminary plat for 120 homes will be reviewed later.

CARIBOU COUNTY

- Simplot's Conda Pump Station was honored for operating at the highest safety level by the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration. This is the 11th year the facility has been recognized. Of the seven million workplaces being monitored, only 1,600 have achieved this honor – four of those facilities are in Caribou County. The other three are Monsanto Elemental Phosphates, Agrium Conda Phosphate and Kerr-McGee Specialty-Chemicals
- The Caribou County Planning and Zoning Commission is developing new ordinances to implement the county's revised comprehensive plan. Major changes require developers to build oiled roads that essentially meet county standards and to provide common well and septic systems in subdivisions with lots smaller than five acres.
- Caribou Memorial Hospital is working with Bear Lake Memorial to recruit a surgeon to replace Dr. John O'Bray. Because neither Soda Springs nor Montpelier have a large enough population to support specialized physicians, the hospitals hope combining resources will enable them to recruit specialized physicians to the area.
- The Soda Springs City Council has contracted with Mountain Island Energy to conduct wind power feasibility testing on Rabbit Hill.
- Several local businesses have taken advantage of an energy conservation program funded by the Idaho Energy Authority and the city of Soda Springs. If lighting loads are reduced 30 percent or more, up to 70 percent of the project cost is reimbursed. D&S Elec-

trical will conduct the energy audits and recommend appropriate upgrades as well as completing paperwork for the business.

ONEIDA COUNTY

- County voters will cast their ballots May 22 on a \$5.6 million bond issue to build a 64-bed jail. If the bond passes, construction could start by late summer.

POWER COUNTY

- Discussions are continuing on how to replace Exit 40 on Interstate 84. Idaho Department of Transportation officials recently announced they would be replacing the current interchange with a new one located 50 feet to the east for an estimated \$5 million. But local residents favor a new underpass 1,500 feet to the west of the current interchange, contending that will

help economic development by providing better access to industrial sites and American Fall's businesses. That proposal is estimated to cost \$8 million.

- Kristen Jensen has been named director of the Great Rift Business Development Organization. She has a long history of involvement in American Falls as city councilwoman, coach, 4-H leader and church leader. In her new duties, she will serve the communities of American Falls, Aberdeen and Rockland.

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NEW TOOL - LOCATION QUOTIENT CALCULATOR - PROVIDES METHOD FOR COMPARING STATS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has introduced a new tool for labor market analysis to its Web site services — the Location Quotient Calculator. The calculator generates location quotients, a measure that is familiar to regional labor economists as a way to readily compare the industrial activity levels among different areas of the country.

In general, location quotients are ratios that compare the concentration of a resource or activity, such as employment, in a defined area to that of a larger area or base. For example, location quotients can be used to compare state employment by industry to that of the nation. It is also used to compare state employment to a city, county, metropolitan statistical area or other defined geographic sub-area in the state. The location quotient calculator uses a timely data source that is especially rich in comprehensive industry and area detail — the bureau's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

With just a few quick selections from the Web form, the user can specify a base or reference area — usually the United States as a whole — and a base or reference industry — usually the private sector, all industries — where industries are classified on a North American Industry Classification System basis. The user may choose up to three geographic areas to be compared to the base area and may choose numerous industries to be compared to the base industry. Users may choose standard industry lists, such as the supersector, sector or subsector levels, or they may select any number of broad or narrowly defined industries for analysis. This innovative use of quarterly census data allows for focused, detailed industry study at the desired geographic level.

For more on how to use the Location Quotient Calculator, log onto <http://www.bls.gov/cew/cewlq.htm>. Click on [Location Quotient Calculator](#) to use the calculator.

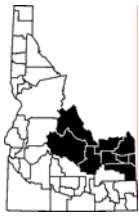
Location Quotient Calculator

STEP 1 - YEAR SELECTION AND OTHER DATA CHARACTERISTICS

Year:	2003
Data Period:	Annual Average
Data Type:	All Employees
Ownership:	Private
Establishment Sizes:	All establishment sizes

Sample of calculator found on the bureau's Web site.

Year:	2003
Data Period:	2003 2002 2001
Data Type:	average employees
Ownership:	Private
Establishment Sizes:	All establishment sizes



East Central Idaho News

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON & TETON COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate remained constant over the month at 2.3 percent and was seven-tenths of a percentage point below March 2006 in the Idaho Falls Metropolitan Statistical Area as shown in East Central Idaho Table 1. It is the lowest rate since August 2006. In August 2005, the rate dropped below 3 percent and has pretty much stayed there since. Besides construction showing a large increase in jobs in March with relatively dry, temperate weather, retail jobs were notably higher. Kohl's hired and started training employees in preparation for the early April opening of its new store. Year-over-year, part of the construction increase — 40 jobs — was the result of the reclassification of jobs from the natural resources sector. Professional services posted a decline of almost 4,000 when those jobs at the Idaho National Laboratory were properly reported as being in Butte County rather than Bonneville County even though most of those workers live in the Idaho Falls area. Nonfarm payroll jobs are counted where the job is located, not where the worker lives.

SPECIAL TOPIC: FINDING HIDDEN EMPLOYEES AND KEEPING CURRENT ONES

As more and more employers battle for employees in a tight labor market, they want to know where the hidden workers are. They might be comforted to know those workers are all around but it may take coaxing to get them back into the workplace. Among them are . . .

- Students/Youth
- Hispanics – a fast growing minority
- Older workers
- Disabled or handicapped people

Students/Youth

Many employers don't realize that students and youth can be hired at age 14 and 15. Pamphlets on youth labor laws are available at Idaho Commerce & Labor offices. Many youth this age want

East Central Idaho Table 1: Idaho Falls MSA Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville and Jefferson counties

	Mar 2007*	Feb 2007	Mar 2006	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	58,820	58,050	58,160	1.3	1.1
Unemployment	1,370	1,350	1,770	1.5	-22.6
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.3%	2.3%	3.0%		
Total Employment	57,450	56,690	56,380	1.3	1.9
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	57,450	56,900	56,990	1.0	0.8
Unemployment	1,690	1,820	2,060	-7.1	-18.0
% of Labor Force Unemployed	2.9%	3.2%	3.6%		
Total Employment	55,760	55,090	54,930	1.2	1.5
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	50,400	49,880	53,490	1.0	-5.8
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	7,710	7,500	7,270	2.8	6.1
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	50	0.0	-80.0
Construction	4,260	4,060	3,890	4.9	9.5
Manufacturing	3,440	3,430	3,330	0.3	3.3
Food Manufacturing	1,090	1,090	1,030	0.0	5.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	240	240	240	0.0	0.0
Machinery Manufacturing	150	150	160	0.0	-6.3
Other Manufacturing	1,960	1,950	1,900	0.5	3.2
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	42,690	42,380	46,220	0.7	-7.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	13,530	13,326	13,470	1.5	0.4
Wholesale Trade	4,030	3,957	4,180	1.8	-3.6
Retail Trade	7,710	7,593	7,650	1.5	0.8
Utilities	60	57	50	5.3	20.0
Transportation	1,730	1,719	1,590	0.6	8.8
Information	1,240	1,230	1,180	0.8	5.1
Financial Activities	2,220	2,216	2,140	0.2	3.7
Professional & Business Services	5,510	5,501	9,480	0.2	-41.9
Educational & Health Services	6,950	6,915	6,790	0.5	2.4
Leisure & Hospitality	4,360	4,354	4,420	0.1	-1.4
Other Services	1,910	1,911	2,040	-0.1	-6.4
Government Education	3,730	3,738	3,470	-0.2	7.5
Government Administration	3,240	3,193	3,230	1.5	0.3

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

to work, but fear of unknown labor laws discourages many employers from hiring them. By hiring these young people, employers help these workers become familiar with their options at a much younger age, and that helps them prepare for careers by developing responsibility and knowing their potential. Hiring at 16 and 17 only requires employers to watch the type of work these young people are given. Dangerous or potentially hazardous jobs are prohibited. Again, many of them want to work but can only find jobs by word of mouth from other friends who

happen to know a company that hires young people. In a tight labor market, finding the talents and potential of youth will help alleviate some of the pressure a company may be experiencing by overworking its current employees. It will also keep many of the youth from exploring things that might not be in their best interest or the best interest of the community.

Hispanics

The Hispanic population is also overlooked. If language is a barrier, an employer can encourage their workers to take English as a Second Language classes at places like Eastern Idaho Technical College that will help them improve their English and discover hidden talents and skills. Many Hispanic youngsters do not have a problem with the English language and most are bilingual, having interpreted for their parents from very early ages.

Disabled and Handicapped

The disabled and handicapped are very available and capable of many jobs. While some have job coaches to help them, others can work on their own. Contact can be made through the Development Workshop in Idaho Falls and other organizations.

Older Workers

Many times older workers either cannot afford to or do not want to retire but may not want to work full time. Job sharing might be one option, even overlapping a few hours for new employees to glean from experienced workers while older workers learn new technology from young employees. There are older worker programs in the community to help those looking for work make contacts. Most of these organizations have representatives who are available at the Idaho Commerce & Labor local offices each week to meet with clients and others.

Another aspect of a tight labor market is making sure employers don't lose their best or developing employees. According to Mike Hill, supervisor of the Idaho Falls Commerce & Labor office, an employer can benefit from a few simple tips, listed below..

Tips for the Work Place	
Do:	Don't:
Pay Fair	Micromanage
Reward Often	Assume
Develop Employees	Demean
Become a Team	Rush
Correctly Place Employees	Overwork
Invest in Employees' Health	Generalize
Help Employees Succeed	Shift the Blame
Get to Know Employees	Make Idle Threats
Have Fun, Listen, Follow Through	

By investing in employees, employers will reduce training, maximize wages and lessen the learning curve. Em-

ployers will also find that wages are very attractive, but a fun and healthy working environment will keep employees and add to their job satisfaction. Positive word of mouth can help tremendously with a company's marketing strategy.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

BONNEVILLE COUNTY

- Eagle View Plaza is the newest construction at Taylor Crossing on the River in Idaho Falls. It faces the roundabout from the northwest and has a great view of the sculptured eagles and mountain lion in the beautiful fountain. It is the largest building in the professional development at 75,000 square feet with a three-story atrium. The building is to open in spring 2008 and will have a restaurant and possible medical spa. Edge Wireless opened its call center in the Michael W. McNeil building at Taylor Crossing with 40 employees. This is an expansion of the Bend, Ore., facility where representatives assist customers with billing, technical support and other inquiries.
- Rocknak's Hardware Plus opened a new store in the Idaho Falls area. The 10,000-square-foot store is an addition to the one on the west side of Idaho Falls. The new store was a result of closing a Wyoming store and needing a place for the extra inventory in a location that would still be profitable.

MADISON COUNTY

- Miller's Hideaway recently closed its doors at the south Rexburg exit. It was the only bar in the community. Although alcohol permits have been an issue in Rexburg for some time, places such as Applebee's have been able to work around the fact that they are not issued to find a way to start building in the area. Pressure from locals and declining sales were noted as reasons for the closure. The land and building have been sold to Las Vegas speculators and the building will be razed.
- Madison Memorial Hospital of Rexburg opened its \$55 million expansion of its Mother Baby Unit in April. The addition has spacious rooms, wood furnishings, large windows, daddy sleepers and Jacuzzi access. The private rooms give new mothers more comfort and privacy and allow space for visitors. There are still other expansions under way, but this unit was a priority with all the new residents. The hospital also hopes to open a newborn intensive care unit in about a year.

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IDAHO'S WAGES FROM 2001 TO 2006 STAYED THE COURSE

The national recession of 2001-2002 stifled economic growth across Idaho. Businesses put the brakes on, hoping to navigate the downturn without suffering serious financial upheaval. Unemployment jumped. Local rates over 6 percent were common. Double digit jobless rates persisted in too many rural counties.

But for those who managed to keep working through the downturn, wages increased in parts of rural Idaho at a faster pace than for the rest of the state. In part, that was a testament not only to the hardiness of the rural economy that had not enjoyed a full measure of the growth surge in the 1990s but also to the fact that Idaho's rural economy may have been stretched to its limit already without any more to give.

At the same time, however, the more urban areas of the state that seemed to bear the brunt of the slowdown recovered steadily and strongly after 2002, essentially erasing the gains those rural communities had made. With a few notable exceptions, that reflects the continued migration of people and jobs to Idaho's larger cities.

Rural Idaho's economy may have had its volatility limited with the passing of natural resources as the only driving force, but it runs at a level well below the statewide norm. More urban areas, while reacting much more drastically to downward economic swings, also bounced back more strongly and to a substantially higher level.

In 2001 as the economy was beginning to weaken, Idaho's average weekly wage was \$534, based on required employer reports detailing total wages paid and the number of employees paid. The reports, mandated under the unemployment insurance program, do not indicate whether an employee worked part time, full time or overtime. They do include bonuses, severance or other one-time compensation employees may receive during a year. Employers covered by the unemployment insurance program paid nearly 95 percent of all wages and salaries in Idaho in 2006.

Only six of Idaho's 44 counties – Ada, Blaine, Butte, Caribou, Nez Perce and Power – recorded average wages higher than the statewide average. Ada is the state's economic hub. Blaine is home to the posh

FYI Table 1: Counties with Average Weekly Wage at least \$100 Lower Than the Statewide Average, 2001-2006

County	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006*
Idaho	\$534	\$542	\$551	\$574	\$592	\$626
Camas	\$322	\$357	\$371	\$394	\$485	\$537
Oneida	\$345	\$357	\$355	\$373	\$388	\$423
Bear Lake	\$351	\$364	\$367	\$372	\$388	\$389
Madison	\$372	\$400	\$422	\$442	\$447	\$470
Washington	\$373	\$389	\$397	\$423	\$453	\$464
Franklin	\$375	\$384	\$395	\$398	\$433	\$447
Boise	\$378	\$399	\$403	\$458	\$459	\$498
Lewis	\$378	\$389	\$394	\$405	\$441	\$447
Elmore	\$382	\$404	\$419	\$440	\$472	\$489
Teton	\$389	\$408	\$436	\$450	\$491	\$513
Clark	\$400	\$432	\$466	\$454	\$493	\$576
Owyhee	\$402	\$397	\$398	\$435	\$475	\$493
Lemhi	\$405	\$412	\$421	\$432	\$452	\$478
Cassia	\$419	\$429	\$438	\$455	\$467	\$494
Gooding	\$419	\$436	\$438	\$461	\$483	\$491
Valley	\$420	\$430	\$428	\$452	\$503	\$561
Adams	\$421	\$448	\$447	\$445	\$462	\$500
Fremont	\$429	\$434	\$452	\$456	\$471	\$494
Jerome	\$431	\$446	\$457	\$479	\$491	\$512
Twin Falls	\$432	\$438	\$455	\$470	\$482	\$509
Lincoln	\$433	\$437	\$452	\$480	\$505	\$522

*=preliminary

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Idaho Commerce & Labor

Sun Valley resort area, where average wages even for waitresses and others in the hospitality sector run \$100 a week or more above the statewide average. Butte County includes the Idaho National Laboratory and its scientists and engineers. Caribou and Power counties both had work forces heavily involved in elemental phosphorus mining, and Nez Perce was anchored by the Potlatch mill.

In contrast, 21 counties recorded average wages of at least \$100 a week below the state wide average, and Camas County, extremely rural and sparsely populated, posted the lowest average wage at \$322 a week. All 21 were heavily agricultural and south of the Salmon River, indicating the impact the high-paying timber and mining sectors have in northern and north central Idaho even though both had declined far from their heydays in 2001.

Idaho's four other major urban counties – Ban-
nock, Bonneville, Canyon and Kootenai – were within
\$60 of the statewide average.

With the national recession gripping Idaho's econ-
omy, wages essentially stagnated as the number of
people looking for work jumped. Statewide, the aver-
age weekly wage rose just 1.4 percent in 2002 and
just 1.8 percent in 2003.

But in those 21 lowest counties, the average wage
was up over 3 percent in both years. Seventeen of the
21 posted increases higher than the statewide aver-
age increase in 2002 and 13 did the same in 2003.

The dollar impact, however, was not as significant
as the percentages might suggest. A 3 percent in-
crease on a \$409 weekly wage for the 21 lowest
counties translated into \$13. But a 1.4 percent in-
crease on the higher \$534 average wage statewide
still produced \$8 more a week.

In 2006, wage growth was even stronger at over 5
percent, but it fell short of the nearly 6 percent growth
in wages statewide as instances and pockets of skill
shortages marked the state and translated into gen-
eral manpower shortages in lesser skilled sectors. Em-
ployers, especially in the urban areas, were forced to
respond with financial incentives that pushed weekly
paychecks higher.

By the end of 2006, average weekly wages were
higher than in 2001, despite the slowdown, in every
county except Power County, where the closure of the
elemental phosphorus operation had a severe impact.
But aside from being higher, the relationship of aver-
age weekly wages among the counties was little
changed.

Only six counties had average weekly wages above
the statewide average of \$626. Custer County, with a
resurgence of mining activity, and Bonneville County,

which has seen substantial
population growth and eco-
nomic development, replaced
Power and Nez Perce counties,
which have yet to significantly
participate in the post-
recession expansion that most
of the rest of the state has felt.

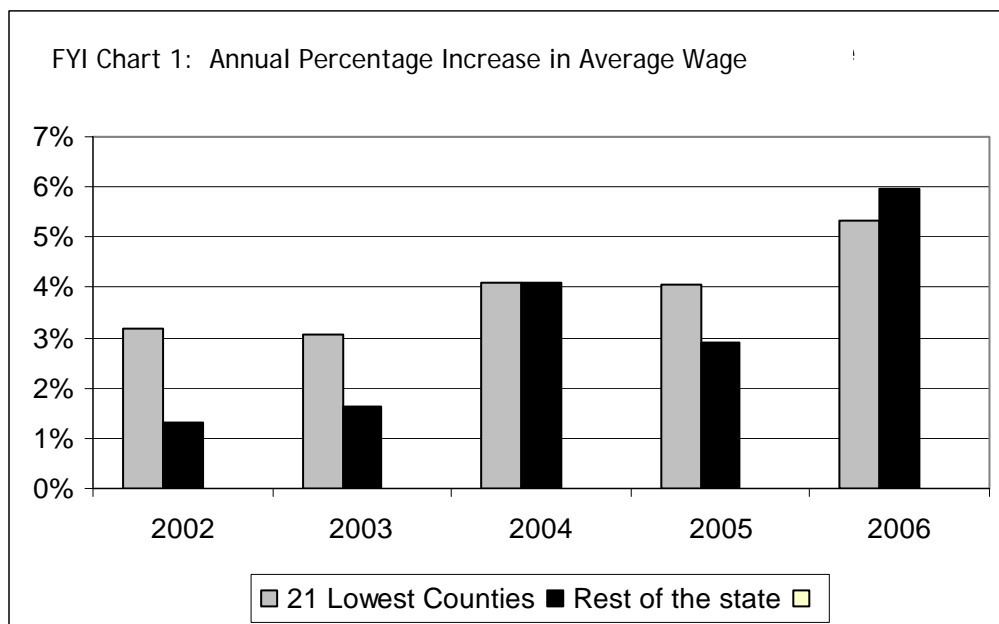
Instead of 21 counties
with average weekly wages
\$100 or more below the state-
wide average, there were 24.
Breaking away from the bloc
were Camas, which has seen
some increase in population,
trade and resort activity; Valley,
where construction at the new
Tamarack resort pushed the
average weekly wage up over

\$100 in just two years; and Clark, an extremely small
agricultural county where even very modest changes in
economic circumstances have a dramatic statistical
impact.

Replacing and expanding on those three were Bing-
ham, Boundary, Gem, Latah, Minidoka and Payette
counties – all rural.

See FYI Table 2: Average Weekly Earnings by County
on page 34.

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By the time the rate of increase for the rest of the
state caught up with the rate for the lowest 21 coun-
ties in 2004 at around 4.1 percent for each, there
was still a \$116 gap between the average weekly
wage statewide and the average for the 21 lowest
counties. Only 11 of the lowest counties saw average
wages increase at or above the statewide rate.

Wages in those 21 counties did advance a percent-
age point faster than for the rest of the state in 2005
at just over 4 percent again as several areas bene-
fited from continued population growth and some eco-
nomic development success. In fact, 16 of those
counties saw average weekly wages growth faster
than they did statewide.

FYI Table 2: Average Weekly Earnings by County, 2001-2006

County	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006*	Chg 01-06
Idaho	\$534	\$542	\$551	\$574	\$592	\$626	17.27%
Ada	\$636	\$647	\$657	\$687	\$708	\$754	18.53%
Adams	\$421	\$448	\$447	\$445	\$462	\$500	18.80%
Bannock	\$473	\$485	\$491	\$514	\$535	\$544	15.10%
Bear Lake	\$351	\$364	\$367	\$372	\$388	\$389	10.97%
Benewah	\$506	\$510	\$519	\$553	\$575	\$594	17.45%
Bingham	\$450	\$465	\$468	\$488	\$499	\$521	15.86%
Blaine	\$612	\$626	\$588	\$611	\$632	\$681	11.33%
Boise	\$378	\$399	\$403	\$458	\$459	\$498	31.66%
Bonner	\$455	\$465	\$480	\$509	\$548	\$579	27.25%
Bonneville	\$521	\$545	\$553	\$573	\$591	\$631	21.08%
Boundary	\$448	\$469	\$481	\$507	\$493	\$524	16.86%
Butte	\$1,106	\$1,132	\$1,173	\$1,239	\$1,176	\$1,306	18.10%
Camas	\$322	\$357	\$371	\$394	\$485	\$537	66.66%
Canyon	\$500	\$488	\$502	\$521	\$532	\$562	12.40%
Caribou	\$665	\$658	\$688	\$709	\$713	\$751	12.93%
Cassia	\$419	\$429	\$438	\$455	\$467	\$494	17.96%
Clark	\$400	\$432	\$466	\$454	\$493	\$576	44.03%
Clearwater	\$474	\$479	\$481	\$496	\$515	\$548	15.62%
Custer	\$463	\$429	\$456	\$493	\$563	\$630	36.09%
Elmore	\$382	\$404	\$419	\$440	\$472	\$489	27.93%
Franklin	\$375	\$384	\$395	\$398	\$433	\$447	19.25%
Fremont	\$429	\$434	\$452	\$456	\$471	\$494	15.26%
Gem	\$435	\$405	\$411	\$424	\$438	\$478	9.82%
Gooding	\$419	\$436	\$438	\$461	\$483	\$491	17.25%
Idaho	\$451	\$462	\$479	\$501	\$517	\$539	19.52%
Jefferson	\$451	\$462	\$479	\$501	\$517	\$539	19.52%
Jerome	\$431	\$446	\$457	\$479	\$491	\$512	18.89%
Kootenai	\$480	\$487	\$506	\$529	\$542	\$572	19.23%
Latah	\$459	\$470	\$473	\$485	\$505	\$505	9.93%
Lemhi	\$405	\$412	\$421	\$432	\$452	\$478	17.99%
Lewis	\$378	\$389	\$394	\$405	\$441	\$447	18.13%
Lincoln	\$433	\$437	\$452	\$480	\$505	\$522	20.47%
Madison	\$372	\$400	\$422	\$442	\$447	\$470	26.43%
Minidoka	\$444	\$453	\$439	\$457	\$466	\$492	10.73%
Nez Perce	\$547	\$552	\$560	\$576	\$581	\$607	11.02%
Oneida	\$345	\$357	\$355	\$373	\$388	\$423	22.74%
Owyhee	\$402	\$397	\$398	\$435	\$475	\$493	22.62%
Payette	\$434	\$456	\$471	\$470	\$495	\$518	19.31%
Power	\$575	\$508	\$511	\$529	\$502	\$564	-1.84%
Shoshone	\$453	\$459	\$478	\$507	\$533	\$568	25.32%
Teton	\$389	\$408	\$436	\$450	\$491	\$513	31.92%
Twin Falls	\$432	\$438	\$455	\$470	\$482	\$509	17.93%
Valley	\$420	\$430	\$428	\$452	\$503	\$561	33.59%
Washington	\$373	\$389	\$397	\$423	\$453	\$464	24.34%
Unknown	\$721	\$727	\$781	\$808	\$989	\$1,071	48.50%

* = preliminary

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Idaho Commerce & Labor

Glossary of Labor Market Terms

Agriculture Employment: Persons on agriculture payrolls who work or receive pay for any period during the survey week. This includes owners, operators, unpaid family members who work at least 15 hours a week, and hired laborers.

Average Hourly Earnings/Average Weekly Hours: The average total money earnings earned by production or non-supervisory workers for selected industries. The average number of hours worked by production or non-supervisory workers including overtime, paid vacation, and sick leave. The data is collected for the week including the 12th of the month.

Average Weekly Earnings: Average Hourly Earnings multiplied by Average Weekly Hours.

Civilian Labor Force: A count of non-institutional persons 16 years of age and over residing within a specific geographic area, excluding members of armed forces, who are classified as employed, unemployed and seeking employment, or involved in a labor dispute.

Consumer Price Index (CPI): A national index measuring changes over time in the price of a fixed market basket of goods and services. There are two indexes—the All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) represents the buying habits of about 80 percent of the non-institutional population of the United States, and the Urban Wage & Clerical Workers (CPI-W) represents 40 percent of the population.

Covered Employers: Employers who are subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance laws.

Durable Goods: Also known as “hard goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers with a normal life expectancy of three years or more.

Employed: Individuals, 16 years of age or older, who worked at least 1 hour for pay or profit or worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family business during the week including the 12th day of the month. Individuals are also counted as employed if they had a job but did not work because they were: ill, on vacation, in a labor dispute, prevented from working because of bad weather, or temporarily absent for similar reasons.

Initial Claim: Any notice of unemployment filed to request (1) a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation or (2) a second or subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA): Combinations of counties in which at least half the residents live in an urban center of 50,000 or more and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MSAs. Idaho has five MSAs: Boise MSA including Ada, Canyon, Boise, Gem and Owyhee counties; Bonneville MSA including Bonneville and Jefferson counties; Pocatello MSA including Bannock and Power counties; Lewiston MSA including Nez Perce County and Asotin County, Wash.; Coeur d’Alene MSA including Kootenai, Boundary, Bonner, Benewah and Shoshone counties.

Micropolitan Statistical Area (MicSA): Combinations of counties in which at least half the residents live in urban

centers totaling at least 10,000—or 5,000 living in a single urban center—and the rest have significant commuting ties to that central county. The Office of Management and Budget designates the MicSAs. Idaho has three MicSAs: Burley MicSA including Cassia and Minidoka counties; Rexburg MicSA including Madison and Fremont counties; Twin Falls MicSA including Twin Falls and Jerome counties.

Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment: Persons on nonfarm establishment payrolls (including employees on paid sick leave, paid holiday, or paid vacation) who work or receive pay for any part of the week including the 12th of the month. It is a count of jobs by place of work. It does not include self-employed, unpaid volunteer or family workers, domestic workers in households, military personnel and persons who are laid off, on leave without pay, or on strike for the entire reference period.

Nondurable Goods: Also known as “soft goods” because they include items manufactured or provided by wholesalers that generally last for only a short period of time (three years or less).

Seasonally Adjusted: Data is seasonally adjusted to remove the impact of regular events that occur at the same time every year such as the effect of cold weather on outdoor activities, the Christmas holiday, or the summer influx of youth into the labor market.

Small Labor Market Areas (SLMA): Combinations of counties with significant ties through commuting patterns but no urban centers with populations of 10,000 or more. The Office of Management and Budget designates the SLMAs. Idaho has two SLMAs: Hailey SLMA including Blaine and Camas counties; Grangeville SLMA including Lewis and Idaho counties.

Unemployed: Those individuals, 16 years of age or older, who do not have a job but are available for work and actively seeking work during the week including the 12th of the month. The only exceptions to these criteria are individuals who are waiting to be recalled from a layoff and individuals waiting to report to a new job within 30 days—these, too, are considered unemployed.

Unemployment Insurance: Unemployment Insurance is a program for the accumulation of funds paid by employers, to be used for the payment of Unemployment Insurance to workers during periods of unemployment which are beyond their control.

Unemployment Rate: The number of persons unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labor force.

Weekly Benefit Amount: The amount payable to a claimant for a compensable week of total unemployment.

Weeks Claimed: The number of weeks that unemployed workers claimed Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Weeks Compensated: The number of weeks for which compensation was actually paid.

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